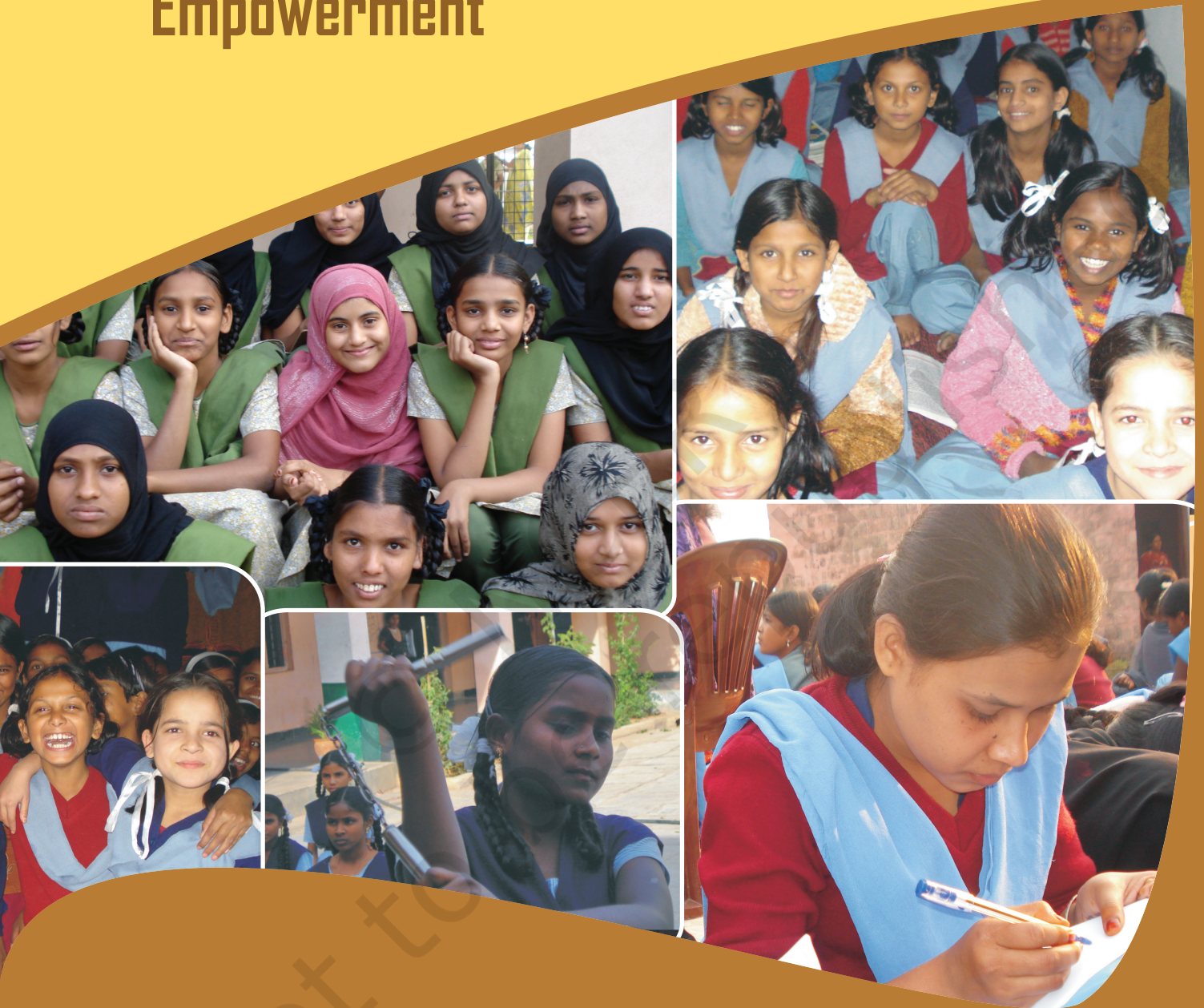


# Training Material for Teacher Educators on Gender Equality and Empowerment



Gender and Schooling Processes

Vol. II



विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते  
एन सी ई आर टी  
NCERT

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

## *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 !*



# Training Material for Teacher Educators on Gender Equality and Empowerment

---

---

## Gender and Schooling Processes

---

---

### Volume II

विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



एन सी ई आर टी  
NCERT

जेंडर अध्ययन विभाग

Department of Gender Studies

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

ISBN 978-93-5007-261-5

**First Edition**

August 2013 Shravana 1935

**Reprinted**

April 2019 Chaitra 1941

**PD 1T RPS**

© National Council of Educational  
Research and Training, 2013

₹ 210.00

Printed on 80 GSM paper

Published at the Publication Division  
by the Secretary, National Council of  
Educational Research and Training,  
Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110  
016 and printed at Nikhil Offset, 223,  
DSIDC Complex, Okhla Industrial Area,  
Phase-I, New Delhi 110020.

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

- ❑ No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.
- ❑ This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise disposed of without the publisher's consent, in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published.
- ❑ The correct price of this publication is the price printed on this page. Any revised price indicated by a rubber stamp or by a sticker or by any other means is incorrect and should be unacceptable.

**OFFICES OF THE PUBLICATION  
DIVISION, NCERT**

NCERT Campus  
Sri Aurobindo Marg  
**New Delhi 110 016 Phone : 011-26562708**

108, 100 Feet Road  
Hosdakere Halli Extension  
Banashankari III Stage  
**Bangalore 560 085 Phone : 080-26725740**

Navjivan Trust Building  
P.O.Navjivan  
**Ahmedabad 380 014 Phone : 079-27541446**

CWC Campus  
Opp. Dhankal Bus Stop  
Panihati  
**Kolkata 700 114 Phone : 033-25530454**

CWC Complex  
Maligaon  
**Guwahati 781 021 Phone : 0361-2674869**

**Publication Team**

Head, Publication Division : *M. Siraj Anwar*  
Chief Editor : *Shveta Uppal*  
Chief Production Officer : *Arun Chitkara*  
Chief Business Manager : *Abinash Kullu*  
Editorial Assistant : *Mathew John*  
Production Assistant : *Mukesh Gaur*

**Cover and Layout Design**

*Surender Kumar*

## 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 an 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  
Research and Training

---

## **DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

### **Authors**

Gouri Srivastava, Department of Gender Studies, NCERT

Indu Kumar, Central Institute of Education Technology, NCERT

Kirti Kapoor, Department of Education in Languages, NCERT

Lata Pandey, Department of Elementary Education, NCERT

Mona Yadav, Department of Gender Studies, NCERT

Rashmee Sood, Springdales School

Sujata Lakhani, Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi

Sushma Jaireth, Retd. Department of Gender Studies, NCERT

Vertika Chowdhary, Miranda House, University of Delhi

Mily Roy Anand, Department of Gender Studies

### **Editors**

Anita Vaidyanathan, Independent Education Consultant

Namita Ranganathan, Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi

Nandita Singh, Independent Education Consultant

Usha Nayar, All India Women's Conference

### **Coordinators**

Gouri Srivastava, Department of Gender Studies, NCERT

Mona Yadav, Department of Gender Studies, NCERT

## CONTENTS

Foreword iii

Introduction 1

### **VOLUME II : GENDER AND SCHOOLING PROCESSES**

#### **Modules**

1. Textbooks, Pedagogy and Gender Concerns 3-20
2. Language and Gender 21-27
3. पाठ्येतर सामग्री और जेंडर संवेदनशीलता 28-38
4. Creating Gender Friendly Classrooms 39-49
5. Mental Health of Adolescent Girls: Concepts, Concerns and Strategies 50-65
6. Teacher as a Counsellor 66-77
7. Life Skills Education for Schools 78-89
8. Development of Leadership Qualities in Girls 90-103
9. Nurturing Sports and Physical Education among Girls and Women 104-111
10. Women in Unconventional Roles: The Power of Role Models 112-124
11. Appendix 125-127

# Introduction

This volume focuses on different issues and practices related to gender that can be observed in schooling systems and processes. These tend to be both visible and invisible in nature and cut across dimensions of curriculum, pedagogy, classroom practices, the school ethos and how teachers define their role. While the modules carry a rich analysis of all these aspects aptly locating them in the experiences of the girl child, they also make significant suggestions and recommendations which can be adopted by schools to bring about change in the existing scenario. They repose faith in the dignity, capability and self worth of the girl child and spell out ways in which she can be nurtured while at school. All the nine modules in this volume are of considerable relevance and use to teachers, teacher educators, policy makers and school administrators. They will help to sharpen their sensitivity and understanding on issues related to gender and schooling and provide them practical guidelines for moving ahead.

Module 1, *Textbooks, Pedagogy and Gender Concerns* sensitizes the readers towards gender bias in language, textbooks and classroom processes. Such biases strengthen and perpetuate gender stereotyping through the nature of content and illustrations that they carry and the usage of sexist language. The author aims at building critical awareness about all these aspects. In addition, she provides guidelines on what a gender sensitive education should focus on.

Module 2, *Language and Gender* draws attention to the importance of using gender fair language and gender sensitive content,

audio visual aids and illustrations. The writer has incorporated self reflective activities and exercises aimed at fostering a gender friendly environment in the classroom. Clear emphasis has been placed on the need for gender inclusive language in order to break gender stereotyping and evolve a new gender dynamic between men and women.

Module 3, *पाठ्येतर सामग्री और जेंडर संवेदनशीलता (Gender Sensitivity and Additional Reading Material)* focuses on the importance and need of using additional reading material for the inculcation of gender sensitivity among children. The module highlights the need for, selection of and the use of additional reading material in the teaching-learning process. The author has given many examples as substantiation. This module will enable teachers to play their role as facilitators in the selection and use of additional reading material from the lens of building gender sensitivity as well. The content of the module is written in Hindi to make the teaching learning of Hindi as a language more gender inclusive.

Module 4, *Creating Gender Friendly Classrooms* envisages the teacher as an active agent of fostering gender friendly practices in the classroom. The module highlights the role of the teacher as a mentor, counsellor, mediator and facilitator who can inculcate gender sensitivity through her pedagogical approach and portrayal of a positive attitude. Many suggestions have been made on how this can be achieved. Taking recourse to various policies, the author has attempted to redefine the role of the teacher in an entirely new light.

Module 5, *Mental Health of Adolescent Girls: Concepts, Concerns and Strategies*, apart from acquainting the reader with the theories of adolescent development, also delineates the factors affecting their mental health. It also suggests several intervention strategies and coping mechanisms for adolescent girls which schools can follow and implement. The activities in the module are self reflective and cover several life skills. The module has a distinctly pragmatic thrust that can be translated by schools into practice.

Module 6, *Teacher as a Counsellor*, focuses on the importance of organising guidance and counseling services, particularly for girl students by schools. It also highlights the fact that all teachers are in effect counsellors by virtue of the roles and responsibilities that they have to assume. Several intervention strategies have been suggested which can be effectively incorporated into the school system to address the problems of girl students. Care has been taken to detach mental health from the clinical setting and emphasise its preventive and promotional role instead.

Module 7, *Life Skills Education for Schools* highlights the need and importance of introducing life skills at the school level, particularly for girls. An attempt has been made to integrate some of the broad areas of life skills with education. The author has suggested some practical activities which can be undertaken by teachers at different levels of schooling. Real incidents and resource material that highlight the atrocities committed on girls and women like foeticide, rape, etc. have been used to build up sensitivity about these issues and make a case for life skills education.

Module 8, *Development of Leadership Qualities in Girls*, emphasizes on the importance of leadership qualities in girls and women in order to enable them to take empowered roles and positions at home as well as outside. The author has suggested a number of activities which could be incorporated into the school curriculum to foster the development of leadership traits and qualities. Leadership has been envisaged as an essential life skill for girls

and women, which enables them not only to engage in decision making but also active problem solving, when confronted with a crisis situation. Education has been envisaged as a potent tool to develop leadership qualities in girls.

Module 9, *Nurturing Sports and Physical Education among Girls and Women* focuses on the importance of sports and physical activities for girls. An all encompassing and inclusive sports education has been advocated by the author, which would lead to the elimination of gender bias, prejudices and stereotyping allied with certain sports, deemed as girl or boy specific. In order to inculcate gender sensitivity, the author advocates the need for introducing sports activities which relate primarily with the other gender to explode the myth about games and sports being gendercentric. This module suggests certain practical interventions which can be made at the school and policy level to facilitate girls' participation in sports.

Module, 10 *Women in Unconventional Roles: The Power of Role Models*, highlight some of the success stories of those girls and women who have made a mark in profession that have been dominated by men. They have opted for professions which are considered unconventional, and many have succeeded in carving a niche for themselves despite belonging to humble backgrounds. But the achievements and contributions of such woman have not acquired visibility which they actually deserve. It also takes into account the important role of the teachers and various strategies to encourage and facilitate women's entry into various roles which were once denied to them.

The merit of Volume II lies in its pragmatic flavor. The individual modules which form a part of this volume redefine the role of teachers in an entirely new light. They have been envisaged as agents of social and cultural change, who through their positive traits, innovative methodologies, activities, strategies and pedagogical interventions can bring about an attitudinal reconstruction, which might help in the unlearning of gendered and stereotypical attitudes, deeply ingrained in the learners' psyche through the socialization process.

# Textbooks, Pedagogy and Gender Concerns

## Structure of the Module

- 1.1 Overview
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Objectives
- 1.4 Operational Definition of the Key Terms
- 1.5 Initiatives Taken
- 1.6 The Challenges Ahead and Insights Provided by the 'Feminist Critique of Disciplinary Knowledge'
- 1.7 Factors of Gender Bias in Textbooks
- 1.8 Biases in Content Allocation to Female and Male Characters
- 1.9 Role of Textbooks in Building a Positive Self Image of Women in the Different Domains
- 1.10 Biases in the Occupations Assigned to Male and Female Characters
- 1.11 Linguistic Bias in Textbooks
- 1.12 Occurrence of Sexist Language
- 1.13 Biases in Illustrations
- 1.14 Stereotypical Images, Traditional Roles and Derogatory Depiction of Women
- 1.15 How Education through Curriculum, Textbooks and Pedagogy can Address Inequities of Gender?
- 1.16 What a gender Sensitive Education should Focus on?
- 1.17 Exemplar Gender Inclusive Activities
- 1.18 Exemplar Gender Inclusive Evaluative Practices
- 1.19 Suggestions for Textbook Developers
- 1.20 References

### 1.1 OVERVIEW

This module will help the readers understand the idea of addressing gender concerns through textbooks and pedagogy. They will learn how to

recognise the factors of gender bias in textual material; identify the biases with regard to the content or role allocation to male and female characters and find out whether textbooks contribute in building a positive self image

of women in different domains of human civilization. It will also help them to determine biases in the occupations assigned to male and female characters; explore linguistic bias; identify the instances of the use of sexist language and examine biases, if any in illustrations. The readers will also be able to analyze whether textbooks portray women in traditional roles or depicts them in a stereotypical and derogatory manner. The module also suggests 'what a gender sensitive education should focus on'.

## 1.2 INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are important devices in the educational process. They provide guidelines to teachers, embody subjects, contain knowledge and reflect the socio-cultural values of society. Although the main aim of textbook is to form a subject-specific skill as a part of the 'hidden' curriculum, they mediate the worldview, expectations and values of society. The 'hidden' curriculum plays a crucial role in identity formation since it mediates the gender-specific expectations, norms and behaviour, and therefore contributes to the reproduction of social inequalities in society. Thus, as part of the 'hidden' curriculum textbooks might transform, strengthen or diminish the developed and developing power relations both in the classroom and in society. In addition, textbooks also generate the readers' interest towards a particular subject. Textbooks further mark one part of the reality and also contain patterns for arranging and selecting the infinite possible knowledge. What counts as legitimate knowledge is the result of complex power relations and battles among different groups with different competing interests and identities. Generally knowledge given in textbooks reflects that legitimate knowledge does not include the experiences and forms of expressions of those people who have not been in powerful position throughout history, for example, women, or people of lower castes, etc. The experiences and interpretations that are constructed through these power relations do not provide enough identifying links and models for those students whose experiences are excluded from the 'legitimate knowledge'. Therefore, the symbolic representations in the textbooks signify the real power relations, and represent differentiated social relations as natural and unquestionable.

Since textbooks are deemed as the potent tools of knowledge construction, it goes without saying that they also shape the attitudes and belief systems of the learners. Therefore, it becomes imperative that gender sensitivity in textual materials be taken very seriously. It becomes the collective responsibility of the writers and curriculum makers to address these issues with sensitivity. Learning material very often becomes the conveyer of biases and prejudices through the insensitive use of language and role modelling. Until authors, course developers, course writers, instructional designers and teachers are made aware of how and why gender insensitive language and stereotypical gender related issues can and should be eliminated, the problems associated with gender will remain. This learning module will serve as a useful reference for authors, course developers, course writers, instructional designers and teachers to design gender sensitive learning material and adopt gender inclusive methodologies.

## 1.3 OBJECTIVES

- To recognize the factors of gender bias in textual material
- To identify the bias with regard to the content/role allocation to male and female characters
- To find out whether textbooks contribute in building a positive self image of women in different domains and disciplines (i.e. history, society and economic and scientific development)
- To determine biases in the occupations assigned to male and female characters
- To explore linguistic biases
- To identify the instances of the use of sexist language
- To examine biases, if any, in illustrations
- To analyze the stereotypical images and traditional role of women
- To examine instances of derogatory depictions of women.

## 1.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS

**Gender Bias:** Gender bias is the prejudice in action or treatment against a person on

the basis of their sex leading to unequal treatment in opportunity and expectations due to attitudes based on the sex of that person.

**Self Image:** Self image refers to the way in which individuals view themselves. For instance, the biased, differential and discriminatory treatment might induce women to develop a lower self-esteem. They might perceive themselves as less important than men. Men on the other hand might benefit from such socio-cultural attitudes and might develop higher self-esteem and feelings of superiority.

**Linguistic Bias:** Linguistic bias refers to the biases reflected in cross-sex and same sex discourse and behaviour of male and female characters, wherein subordination is very much obvious in female discourse behaviour and authority and dominance in male discourse behaviour.

**Sexist Language:** Linguistic bias also leads to sexist language, wherein the general use of masculine terms and pronouns to reflect a composite audience is very common. Ranging from man, our forefathers, mankind and businessman to the generic he, this form of bias denies the full participation and recognition of women.

**Stereotypical Image:** Stereotypical image is the creation of image by assigning a rigid set of characteristics in the text conforming to the “traditional” gender roles. Stereotypes cast males as active, assertive and curious, while portraying female as dependable, conforming and obedient.

**Traditional Role:** Traditional role refers to the pattern of masculine or feminine behaviour of an individual that is defined by a particular culture and that is largely determined by a child’s upbringing.

**Derogatory Depiction:** Any communication verbal, written or visual that belittles or repeals the image of a group so as to impair its worth is derogatory depiction. Derogatory depiction of women generally leads to prejudice and discrimination against women and also lessening or

weakening of her power, authority and position in societal context.’

### 1.5 INITIATIVES TAKEN

The situation indicated above does not imply that in the current school curriculum, gender is singularly absent. On the contrary, several efforts have been implemented by NCERT and DPEP to ensure “gender sensitivity” in school textbooks and classrooms. It all began in 1975 after the conference was held to examine the status of women through the curriculum. Along with this NCERT the apex body of primary and secondary education tried to identify areas in language and textbooks in the decade of 80s. Some projects and workshops were launched to build up awareness for the elimination of gender difference. In fact, India took an early lead in this area as early as 1976-77 when the Women’s Education Unit of the NCERT organized a historic workshop attended by leading experts and teachers from the school system as well as from the universities to identify values commensurate with the status of women. In line with these identified values, handbooks for teachers were prepared by the teachers and other experts.

Along with these the idea of girls’/ women’s education, issue of accessibility, retention, gender equality, ‘equality of educational opportunity’ viz. a viz. ‘education for women’s equality and empowerment’ and liberation from existing inequalities of gender are envisaged in different National Curriculum Frameworks, for school education (developed by NCERT) in accordance with current concerns and policy perspectives.

Despite the above efforts, and having developed a set of guidelines for the elimination of gender stereotyping in textual material and disseminating the same to the authors and publishers, not much has changed and it was seen that initiatives to remove sexist biases in the textbooks undertaken by the stakeholders

in the last decades are yet again guided by their limited understanding. Most of the text-books developed by state agencies and private publishers reflect facilitation of role reversals in order to depict equality amongst sexes. It is done without any thought of how the very concept of writing accounts of great men's lives needed rethinking. Exceptional women like Rani Jhansi and Madam Curie were still defined by their domestic roles (textbook writers were careful to point out that despite everything they continued to perform their domestic roles. In the text-books of various states, it is seen that women are generally portrayed as passive, dutiful and confined to the home. Like the peasants and manual labourers, women are largely shown as "powerless".

However, the most preferred and expedient way to accomplish the task of addressing gender in the curriculum is very often theoretical. Generally a perfunctory write-up on women in individual disciplines is added. History is always about Rani Laxmi Bai, Noor Jahan, or Razia Sultan and the Science textbooks might just mention Gargi and Maitreyi. This strategy may mark a good fair beginning. However, at the same time this mechanical approach to the inclusion of gender into the syllabi makes absolutely no difference to the rest of the syllabus, which is evident from some recent reviews of the textbooks. Thus, most of the times, the approach remains as most scholars term it now as 'the add women and stir approach' and gender either remains invisible or relegated to being a "women's issue". It is treated as an additional problem to be investigated through existing techniques; that is merely sprinkling 'women' on an otherwise unchanged andro-centric (male-centred) disciplinary landscape.

Viewing the current scenario, now the policy makers and apex bodies related to education like NCERT and CIBE have taken initiative to review the curriculum and text-books afresh. This is one step forward in the direction of one of the goals agreed at the UN

Millennium Summit in September 2000, to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education by 2015.

### **1.6 THE CHALLENGES AHEAD AND INSIGHTS PROVIDED BY THE 'FEMINIST' CRITIQUE OF DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE**

The term 'feminist' is referred to all those ideas and all those persons who seek to address and end women's subordination. In the past two decades feminist critiques, nationally as well as globally, have been instrumental in challenging accepted definitions and expanding the extant boundaries of knowledge across disciplines through critical engagement with traditionally excluded issues related to gender and other social inequalities such as caste, class, race, and ethnicity. At the intellectual level, the critique encompasses a number of challenges to established ideas, including insights into the nature of power and hierarchy, analysis of the importance of gender division of labour, the division between public and private, and a re-valuing of women's experiences. On the other hand, the linkages between gender and curriculum are complex and challenging. School textbooks are a crucial component in the acquisition of knowledge and unless syllabi are revised to incorporate a gendered perspective—along with other marginalized perspectives—schooling will reproduce the narrow biases. Therefore, it is important to recognize that regardless of all the work produced by feminist scholars unless a gender perspective is incorporated in the syllabi each generation of children will absorb the biases of existing ways of understanding society and reproduce these ways of thinking into the future. Hence, it becomes imperative that we address the larger context of feminist critiques of knowledge to clearly understand how we can progressively inform, transform, and map the gender contours of disciplinary

knowledge to delineate a more inclusive and democratic curriculum framework. This implies not only addressing the initial “invisibility” and under-representation of women across the disciplines, but also the manner, if and when, in which they enter it, and the inter-linkages between competing inequalities of caste, class, race, ethnicity, and gender. In addition, it also implies that true knowledge is libratory, crafted with the goal of social transformation. This requires that individuals, be it teachers, textbook writers, or students, read, write and relate to the text with an awareness of their positions in the complex hierarchy of domination and subordination in which we live.

### Self-Reflection

1. Why do issues related to gender and other social inequalities related to caste, class, race and ethnicity need to be addressed through education?

---



---

2. What are the challenges ahead in addressing social inequalities related to caste, class, race and ethnicity, through education?

---



---

## 1.7 FACTORS OF GENDER BIAS

As a general practice, biases with regard to gender, in any learning material are identified in the given forms- invisibility, stereotyping, imbalance/selectivity, unreality, fragmentation/isolation, linguistic bias, visual bias and cosmetic bias.

### (a) Invisibility

Invisibility occurs when a gender, male or female is not included in the work. Invisibility can only be detected after an entire work has been reviewed. Random sampling of the text is not sufficient to show that a certain gender is not included

in the entire work. Occurrence of invisibility is a general phenomenon in Social Studies textbooks where instances of not including the role of women are very common.

### (b) Stereotyping

Stereotyping occurs when gender is assigned a rigid set of characteristics in the text conforming to their “traditional” roles. Stereotypes cast males as active, assertive and curious, while portraying females as dependable, conforming and obedient.

### (c) Imbalanced Selectivity

Imbalanced selectivity is an imbalance in presentation of materials by selective interpretation of events being reported. Textbooks sometimes present only one interpretation of an issue, situation, or a group of people, simplifying and distorting complex issues by omitting different perspectives. This can lead to a distorted reality.

### (d) Unreality

Unreality is similar to imbalance in nature. It occurs when author chooses to avoid controversial issues, or reduces large complex issues to simple. When discussions on discriminations, harassment and inequality are dismissed as remnant of bygone days, students are being treated to unreality. Portrayal of women as involved in non productive activities, despite the fact that they are directly or indirectly involved in productive activities leads to unreality.

### (e) Fragmentation/Isolation

Fragmentation/Isolation can occur when in an attempt to include women or minority in their works, authors, editors, and/or publishers, add additional chapters on women. Isolation presents a group and topics on them as peripheral, less important than the main narrative. Obvious forms and some not so obvious forms can be detected by viewing the material as a whole.

### (f) Linguistic Bias

Language can be a powerful conveyor of bias, in both blatant and subtle forms. By

linguistic bias, the researcher intends to explore whether bias is reflected in cross-sex and same sex discourse behaviour of male and female characters, wherein subordination is very much obvious in female discourse behaviour and authority and dominance in male discourse behaviour. Detecting linguistic bias can be overlooked due to cultural background or upbringing. Linguistic bias also leads to the usage of such language wherein the general use of masculine terms and pronouns, to reflect a composite audience is very common. Ranging from man, our forefathers, mankind and businessman to the generic he, this form of bias denies the full participation and recognition of women.

#### **(g) Visual Bias**

Visual bias refers to the pictures and illustrations in a work, and the ratio of male to female representation. Other than inequality, visual images can also contain stereotyping.

#### **(h) Cosmetic Bias**

Cosmetic bias offers an “illusion of equity”. Beyond the attractive covers, photos, or posters that prominently feature all members of diverse groups, bias persists. For example, a textbook may feature a glossy pullout of female scientists, but it gives little narrative of the scientific contributions of women.

### **1.8 BIASES IN CONTENT ALLOCATION TO FEMALE AND MALE CHARACTERS**

Bias in content allocation gives way to the occurrence of invisibility which is a general phenomenon in text books especially in the textbooks of Social Studies, where instances of not including the role of women are very common. Invisibility occurs when a gender, male or female is not included in the work. Invisibility can only be detected after an entire work has been reviewed. Random sampling of the text is not sufficient to show that a certain gender is not included in the entire work. To identify this and to

obtain a comparative status with regard to content allocation to female and male characters, chapter wise word count of the entire textbook needs to be done. After that to detect the average word allocation to female and male characters the following calculations needs to be done:

- Total numbers of human characters
- Total number of female characters
- Total number of male characters
- Total words allocated to human characters
- Total words allocated to female characters
- Total words allocated to males characters.

Number and percentage of female characters to whom the content is allocated and percentage of male characters to whom the content is allocated also need to be calculated for a comparative analysis of the content allocation to female and male characters. It was found by reviewing elementary level Social Studies text books of a state bureau that the percentage of content allocated to female characters was 13% at the elementary level.

#### **Self-Reflection**

1. Select any textbook of your choice and examine the biases in content allocation to male and female characters?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. In your opinion what are the causes of occurrence of such biases (if any)? What initiatives should be taken to avoid such biases?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **1.9 ROLE OF TEXTBOOKS IN BUILDING A POSITIVE SELF IMAGE OF WOMEN IN THE DIFFERENT DOMAINS**

#### **Domains of Human Civilization**

The domains of human civilization include History and Culture, Society, Economy,

Literature, Polity and Art, Philosophy and Science. Examples related to these domains need to be located in the chapters of the textbooks. Thereafter, a qualitative analysis of these, considering the instances of occurrence and non occurrence of the factors of gender biases should be done to find out whether or not textbooks contribute in building a positive self image of women in different domains of human civilization. A quantitative analysis of textual material by counting the numbers of examples of women participating in different domains of human civilizations leading to building up a positive self image of women in general may easily reveal the type of self image that the textbooks are building. Given below are a few examples taken from the elementary level textbooks of a state bureau –

### **Examples of Positive Self Image**

1. मृत्यु के पूर्व इल्लुतमिष ने अपने सभी अयोग्य पुत्रों को छोड़ कर अपनी पुत्री रजिया को अपना उत्तराधिकारी बनया– A father having faith in his daughter for political leadership.
2. बेगम हज़रत महल ने क्रांति का नेतृत्व करते हुए अंग्रेज़ सेना से युद्ध किया – Leadership, bravery and warfare skills of Begum Hazrat Mahal are highlighted in the lesson
3. शबनम– हाँ दादाजी! आज स्वतंत्रता दिवस है। आज ही के दिन 15 अगस्त, 1947 के दिन हमारा देश आजाद हुआ था। विद्यालय में तिरंगा झंडा फहराया गया। हमने इस उत्सव को उत्साह पूर्वक मनाया– The female child in the chapter is shown as active, alert, inquisitive, vocal and well-informed about the historical context of 15th August, same as the male child who is another character in the chapter.

### **Examples not contributing to a Positive Self Image**

1. मीनू और अमित के पिताजी बस स्टैंड गए हैं। आज दोनों बहुत खुश हैं। गाँव से दादाजी और दादीजी जो आ रहे हैं। उन्होंने जल्दी-जल्दी कमरे की सफाई की। अमित सड़क

पर कचरा डाल रहा था। इतने में दादाजी आ गए। अमित और मीनू ने दादाजी और दादीजी को प्रणाम किया– That is what a 1087 words chapter mentions about an elderly female character. इतने में दादाजी आ गए। Dadiji's existence and presence is merged with Dadaji's existence and presence.

2. पद्मिनी बहुत रूपवती थी। दिल्ली के सुल्तान अलाउद्दीन को इसकी जानकारी मिली। खिलजी उसे प्राप्त करना चाहता था– It is derogatory to portray a woman having the status of a queen and as being desired to be possessed by an invader. What makes him have such a desire is her physical attributes/ beauty. Female characters who are considered distinguished and great are mentioned as a separate group. Bravery in female is associated with the attribute of their character due to which they were happily sending their husband and brother to the war field and when the time came, they sacrificed their lives for their motherland.

It may be a historical fact in a socio-political context which existed several hundred years ago. But, a student of class-IV (from where this example is taken) if not exposed to comparing and contrasting historical realities in different socio-political contexts such themes portray derogation towards female and **does not contribute in building a positive self image of women.**

It is to be noted here that 70% examples in Elementary Level textbooks of the said text book bureau do not contribute in building a positive self image of women in *different domains of human civilization.*

### **Self-Reflection**

1. What initiatives should be taken to ensure that textbooks contribute in building a positive self image of women in the different domains of human civilization?

---



---

### 1.10 BIASES IN THE OCCUPATIONS ASSIGNED TO MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS

To determine biases in occupations assigned to male and female characters, a quantitative analysis needs to be done, considering the following:

- Total number of examples portraying different types of occupations
- Number and percentage of examples not assigned to human characters
- Number and percentage of examples assigned to human characters
- Number and percentage of examples assigned to female characters
- Number and percentage of examples assigned to male characters
- Number and percentage of examples mentioned as gender neutral, gender friendly stereotypical and biased and traditional.

A qualitative analysis needs to be done by identifying the factors of gender biases in assigning occupational roles to male and female characters. The analysed elementary level textbooks of a state text book bureau include 37% examples as gender neutral, 7.5% as gender friendly, 3% as gender biased and 52% as traditional at the elementary level.

### 1.11 LINGUISTIC BIASES IN TEXTBOOKS

To explore linguistic bias, what has to be analysed is whether biases are reflected in cross-sex and same sex discourse behaviour of male and female characters. Portrayal of such discourse behaviour in female characters is characterized by — **nervousness, hesitance, uncertainty, tentativeness, down-toning a statement, conformity, self doubt, affective facilitation, no room for scholarship in speech, using questioning, sharing of observation, knowledge and information to facilitate conversation.** In contrast, male discourse behaviour is characterized by - **confidence, assertiveness, awareness,**

**dominance, power, self reliance, action orientation, inquisitiveness, scholarship in speech, use of questioning to control conversation and sharing of observation, providing knowledge and information in building knowledge in a conversation.**

Positive and gender neutral examples of male and female characters' discourse behaviour have also been explored. A quantitative analysis should be done by counting the number of times, a particular attribute occurs in discourse behaviour of male and female characters. It should also be examined whether discourse behaviour stereotypical to female characters occurred in male discourse behaviour and vice versa.

#### Examples:

- दादाजी बोले रूको! बस में बीड़ी-सिगरेट पीना मना है। तुम अपने स्वास्थ्य के साथ दूसरों का स्वास्थ्य खराब करते हो। दादाजी बोले, बेटा छिलके यहां मत डालो। कचरा बस में डालने से दूसरो को कठिनाई होती है। बस हमारी सुविधा के लिए है। इसे साफ सुथरा रखना हमारा कर्तव्य है।

#### Discourse behaviour of Dadaji reflects

- Dominance
- Using powerful statements which are very much evident from the above small excerpt of Dadaji's discourse and throughout the chapter he speaks in the same manner.
- Confidence in giving ideas.
- Conveying knowledge.
- Having control over conversation as it was mostly dadaji who was speaking.
- माँ: चलो! पटवार घर भी चलते हैं। वहाँ पैसे जमा कराने है। सोनू: पटवारघर में पैसे क्यों जमा कराने है? माँ: चलो, पटवारी से पूछ लेना।
- माँ: इस तरह तो आप लोगों का काम बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण है। चलो बेटा, अब घर चलें! अच्छा पटवारी साहब, हम चलते हैं।

**Discourse Behaviour reflects–**

- Hesitance and self doubt
- Responding to facilitate conversation
- No room for scholarship in speech
- Showing conformity to conveyed ideas

**1.12 OCCURRENCE OF SEXIST LANGUAGE**

Use of sexist language omits women as part of a social group overlooking their participation in different domains of human civilization. For this, instances of occurrence of sexist language should be identified to determine the frequency of occurrence of sexist language. The analysed Elementary level textbooks of a state text book bureau includes a total of two hundred and sixteen instances of sexist language in chapters and exercises.

**Examples:**

<b>Sexist Language</b>	<b>Gender neutral language</b>
गाँव के अस्पताल में... काम करती है। Expected Answer: स्वास्थ्य कार्यकर्ता	गाँव के अस्पताल में... की नियुक्ति होती हैं। Expected Answer: स्वास्थ्य कार्यकर्ता

This example is associating the occupation of Health Worker to a female by using the word *काम करती है*. This question can be reframed by using the word *नियुक्ति होती हैं*, which will portray this occupation as gender neutral.

<b>Exercise 1 Using sexist language</b>	<b>Alternative Exercise using a gender neutral language</b>
आदि मानव अपना शरीर ढकता था।	आदि मानव अपना शरीर ढकते थे।
(अ) कपड़ो से	(अ) कपड़ो से
(ब) कागज़ से	(ब) कागज़ से
(स) पेड़ की छाल व पत्तियों से	(स) पेड़ की छाल व पत्तियों से
(द) इनमे से कोई नहीं	(द) इनमे ये कोई नहीं

**Self-Reflection**

1. Select any textbook of your choice. Are there instances of linguistic biases and sexist language in the text?  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. In your opinion what are the causes of occurrence of such instances (if any)? What initiatives should be taken to avoid such biases?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1.13 BIASES IN ILLUSTRATIONS**

To analyse this, a quantitative analysis considering the following has to be done

- Number and percentage of illustrations related to female characters
- Number and percentage of illustrations related to male characters
- Examples of illustrations with human characters
- Number and percentage of illustrations which are gender neutral
- Number and percentage of illustrations which are gender friendly
- Number and percentage of illustrations which are stereotypical and biased
- Number and percentage of illustrations which are traditional

For qualitative analysis you should identify the factors of gender biases in illustrations

The analysed Elementary level textbooks of a state text book bureau includes a total of three hundred sixteen human characters in illustrations out of which eighty seven are related to female characters and two hundred twenty nine related to male characters. Thus, 28% illustrations relate to female characters and 78% relate to male characters.

There are a total of three hundred ninety five examples of illustrations out of which one hundred and fifty one examples are with human characters. Out of these, ninety two

are Gender Neutral, twenty nine are Gender Friendly, twenty nine are Stereotypical and Biased, one example of illustration is Traditional. In terms of percentage 61% examples of illustrations are Gender Neutral, 19% are Gender Friendly, 19% are Stereotypical and Biased and 0.1% examples is Traditional.

- **Human character** - means individual human beings in illustrations
- **Illustrations** - means a complete composition in a picture/illustration

**Examples:**



The chapter from which the above illustration is taken is about different types of clothing. Different types of clothes are shown in a box wherein a sari (female clothing) has been shown with proper pleats and shape. The **stereotypical** and **traditional** trait that it shows is that, it is shaped as covering the head which is a traditional practice in India, at times imposed due to the social norms.



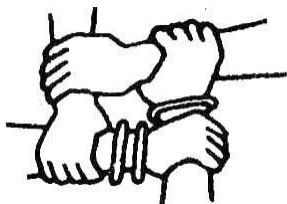
The chapter from which the above three illustrations are taken tells the story of early humans but the illustrations of the chapter excludes female existence, the text and exercises too strengthen the exclusion of female. What role she played has not been illustrated in the chapter, so the illustrations are categorized as **gender biased**.

The following illustration portrays that it is a general practice to consider bank related works as a male domain. Showing no women in the illustration in the bank premises, neither as consumer nor in occupational roles leads to invisibility of





Two female wrists (identified by bangles used as symbol), and two male wrists making a bond symbolizing gender harmony and co-existence making the illustration **gender friendly**.



### 1.14 STEREOTYPICAL IMAGES, TRADITIONAL ROLE AND DEROGATORY DEPICTION OF WOMEN

To analyze this, the number of examples/characters with stereotypical image, number of examples/characters in traditional role, number of examples/characters with derogatory depiction should be calculated. For a qualitative analysis, these examples need to be examined keeping in view the definition and meaning of stereotypical image, traditional roles and derogatory depiction and also whether factors such as gender bias, unequal representation have any bearing on these images, roles and depictions.

#### Examples of Stereotypical Image:

1. सोना : दादाजी, दो दिन बाद हमारे विद्यालय में उत्सव है। मेरी सहेली मोना और मैं नृत्य करेंगे। मोना की माँ उत्सव में भाग लेने आएगी। दादाजी : बेटी, मोना की माँ ग्राम पंचायत की सरपंच है। इसलिए उन्हें मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में बुलाया होगा।

In the Chapter from where the example is taken mentions that being the Sarpanch of the village Mona's mother is being invited as the Chief guest in the school function, but she has been addressed stereotypically as Mona ki Ma and remains at the mentioning level only. She does not have her own identity, even her name is not mentioned in the chapter.

All the knowledge about power and functions of *sarpanch* and *grampanchayat* is transmitted by another male character in the chapter 'dadaji'. It is stereotypical to attribute authority, knowledge and scholarship to a male character. It is equally

stereotypical to keep a woman who actually is in a position of authority, at minimal level of mention and address her only in her gender specific or relational role for e.g. as a mother.

2. अपूर्वा : हाँ, मैं पिताजी से कहूँगी कि अपने नए मकान में लकड़ी के दरवाजे नहीं, प्लास्टिक के दरवाजे लगाएँ

A girl is made to recognize only her father's role in decision making, while the role of her mother is totally negated. Absence of female in decision making role and a young girl conforming to it is an example of stereotyping.

#### Examples of Traditional Roles:

घर का सबसे बड़ा व्यक्ति परिवार का मुखिया होता है। वह परिवार के सभी सदस्यों की देखभाल करता है।

It is suggested that the eldest male member as the head of the family bears all the socio-economic responsibilities and provides security to the family. The role of women as equal counterparts is totally negated.

#### Examples of Derogatory Depiction:

पद्मिनी बहुत रूपवती थी। दिल्ली के सुलतान अलाउद्दीन को इसकी जानकारी मिली। खिलजी उसे प्राप्त करना चाहता था।

खिलजी ने रावल रतन सिंह को संदेश भिजवाया कि वह केवल पद्मिनी को देखकर ही दिल्ली लौट जाएगा। रानी पद्मिनी ने चित्तौड़ को विनाश से बचाने के लिए खिलजी का प्रस्ताव स्वीकार कर लिया। किले में पद्मिनी का प्रतिबिंब दिखाने की व्यवस्था की गई। खिलजी चाह कर भी पद्मिनी को प्रत्यक्ष रूप से नहीं देख सका।

खिलजी के मन में पद्मिनी को पाने की इच्छा बनी रही। कुछ समय बाद खिलजी ने पुनः चित्तौड़ पर आक्रमण किया।

The above description may be true in a certain socio-cultural and historical context but during theme selection for primary level, it should be taken into account not to portray anything derogatory to women.

It is **derogatory** to the dignity of women who in helplessness accepts the nasty proposal of her exhibition in front of a Sultan having political power and authority.

The content depicts a woman being exhibited in front of a lustful Sultan due to political fear. Such content will lead to conformity of the **derogatory** and stereotypical social image of women, wherein she is treated as an object of lust and desire.

Again a woman is portrayed in a **derogatory** manner as an object of possession, the lust driven Sultan attacks Chittaur to possess the beautiful queen.

इस बीच उसने (चन्द्रगुप्त) 305 ईस्वी पूर्व में सिकंदर के सेनापति सैल्यूकस को हराकर उसकी पत्नी से विवाह किया।

Description of providing and possessing women as part of a political treaty is **derogatory**.

### 1.15 HOW EDUCATION THROUGH CURRICULUM, TEXTBOOKS AND PEDAGOGY CAN ADDRESS INEQUITIES OF GENDER?

Education of women has been justified in the interests of supplementary income generation, lower fertility rates and population control, better mothering skills, upholding “tradition” and spiritual values, and improving social cohesion. Most of these interests address women as instruments for up keeping the family and society, sacrificing or ignoring their very identity and rights as individual human beings. *The paradox here is that education, which has been a site for the reproduction of social values and stereotypes which bind and constrain, is also potentially a site for empowerment.*

Moreover, the State and other agencies which “shape” and transmit education through curriculum and pedagogy are also caught in this paradox. On the one hand, they become instrumental in reinforcing subordination and perpetuate

the status-quo and on the other, take on a progressive mantle. The contradictions and tensions that this situation produces is then replicated in the contradictory messages inherent in the construction of knowledge in textbooks too. It is very often observed that *the same textbook can show women as equal in one lesson, and mock women in another.*

If education policy is committed to gender equality, then this contradiction needs to be addressed, and the development of unambiguous progressive perspectives, in the very construction of knowledge have to be acknowledged as a focus of transformation. The curriculum’s presentation of gender relations is frequently based upon popular assumptions or ideas perpetuated by dominant groups. And it normally posits the male as the normative epistemic subject. It rarely takes into account the differentiated contributions, capacities and perspectives of women. *Alternative Gendered Frameworks of Knowledge require equal reflection of the worlds of both men and women and carry within them the seeds of a just social transformation.*

#### (a) Addressing the Hidden Curriculum

The Hidden Curriculum implies organizational arrangements, including rituals and practices in everyday school life like segregated seating, separate lines for girls and boys, or having them form separate teams, differential task assignment and sexual division of labour in school like boys allowed to go out of school, girls sweep, clean, serve water, present bouquets in functions, systems of rewards and punishments, disciplining of boys and girls through different strategies, teacher’s labelling patterns, teacher-student and student-student interactions. Also, “Teaching and learning materials, classroom practices, evaluation and assessment procedures and language policy are all components of curriculum ‘learned’ in school. It demands investigation of the contexts within which children make meaning of, or respond to,

these notions, through the filter of her/his subjective experience while growing up as female/male in society. While it is important to understand the ideologies underlying the presentation of gender in school textbooks, it is equally pertinent to examine how these ideologies are expressed at the level of everyday school practices, experiences and pedagogic practices.

### **(b) Teacher as Facilitator**

Feminist pedagogy emphasizes participatory learning and teaching, within which subjectivity, emotion and experience have a definite and valued place. While participation is a powerful strategy, its pedagogic edge is blunted when it is ritualized. Participation, when seen as an instrument to achieve certain specified, predetermined objectives and where the teacher's own ideas dominate classroom discussions is not meaningful. It involves appreciation of the importance of starting from the experiences of both students and teachers.

The curriculum also has to accommodate pedagogic strategies that deal with the idea of conflict, between what is observed and valued in contemporary society, in the social worlds that children inhabit, and what can be in a gender-just and less violent world. To use conflict as a pedagogic strategy is to enable children to deal with conflict and facilitate awareness of its nature and role in their lives.

If children's social experiences are to be brought into classrooms, it is inevitable that issues of conflict must be addressed. Conflict is an inescapable part of children's lives. They constantly encounter situations which call for moral assessment and action, whether in relation to subjective experiences of conflict involving the self, family and society, or in dealing with exposure to violent conflict in the contemporary world. Yet the official curriculum tends to treat knowledge as neutral, erasing conflict in order to legitimise a certain vision of society

and its knowledge, a vision that is related to dominant discourses.

The school teacher plays an important role in maintaining, modifying and reshaping her understanding of location, in terms of her class, caste, gender, religion, sexuality and region. In the present scenario, where a significant number of children belonging to diverse groups bring with them a variety of cultural practices, knowledge systems and ways of seeing, an understanding of identity becomes critical for the teacher.

What is expected from the teacher? Initiating processes of placing value on the world of the learner while simultaneously developing abilities in the child to reflect on her world and engage with new forms of knowledge, the teacher could facilitate the child towards positive identity formation. This would require the teacher to 'unlearn' her own given assumptions regarding norms, values and ideals. In the absence of this, the teacher's own biases and pre conceptions would make the adoption of such objectives and pedagogies mere rhetorical statements to be enacted through mechanical, ritualised processes.

Issues of curriculum and pedagogy require critical attention to make education gender sensitive.

#### **Self-Reflection**

1. What in your understanding is hidden curriculum? Why is it important  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What should be the role of a teacher to address inequalities of gender and help the child develop a positive self identity?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **1.16 WHAT A GENDER SENSITIVE EDUCATION SHOULD FOCUS ON**

A gender sensitive education should focus on the development of the following

traits-promoting self-recognition, building a positive self-image and fostering self-actualisation by stimulating critical thinking, deepening *understanding of the gendered structures of power, including gender, enabling access to resources*, especially to an expanding framework of information and knowledge, developing the ability to analyse the options available, and to facilitate the possibility of making informed choices, reinforcing the agency of girls to challenge gendered structures of power and take control of their lives.

Therefore, removal of biases and addressing inequalities are not simple tasks, they are complex and challenging. To meet the challenge, all the stakeholders must view education in terms of its transformative potential as a social intervention that works towards re-examining existing realities. Then only education will become the single most powerful process for redressing the inequities of gender and will facilitate forging of new values and forms of society that would enable both women and men to develop their human capacities to their fullest and thereby moving from the given to realizing new ways of imagining our future.

### 1.17 EXEMPLAR GENDER INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

#### (a) What is an activity?

Many people believe an activity is a way of learning which involves physical participation of the children, is fun filled like dramatization, rhymes and songs, puppet play, fun games and so on. All these can serve as very good learning activities. The risk is that often these activities get conducted as an activity for activities sake by teachers and therefore, although joyful, may not lead to any learning. It is important to note that a good activity is one which

- Is a part of a well-planned series of experiences identified by the teacher for the child for a particular learning

area/areas and not an isolated learning experience.

- Involves participation of each child.
- Leads to 'active thinking' on the part of child.
- May or may not involve physical movement but definitely involves use of mental/cognitive skills, such as solving puzzles or writing one's experiences, reading a book or story and inferring something out of it and referring to a dictionary, etc. are also activities.
- Is challenging enough for the child so as to help him practice and apply his skills and knowledge in a variety of ways, across many situations.
- Enables the child to learn in a joyful and interesting way.

#### (b) Cooperative Learning and Activities based on Cooperative Learning:

Cooperative learning is based on the rationale that humans are a group living species and a cohesive group includes both girls and boys. Teachers' role is to essentially equip students with skills to successfully live in their society.

#### (c) Benefits of cooperative learning:

- Making and maintaining social interaction between both the genders,
- Communication competency,
- Problem solving,
- Understanding your role as a teacher in cooperative learning,
- Students are assigned different roles to play in the group to ensure that they need each other to complete the task,
- Students are encouraged to engage in discussions through oral summarising, exchanging explanations and elaborations,
- Students' contributions are frequently assessed by the teacher to ensure that they are taking responsibility for their own learning (individual accountability),
- Students are taught appropriate communication, leadership, trust, decision making and conflict

management skills to facilitate group functions,

- Students must be allowed enough time to work through the processes involved in decision making and
- Students will be motivated to engage in cooperative learning when the teacher rewards the product of the group that would not have been achieved by individual effort alone.

Given below are some of the cooperative learning activities which provide a scope for gender inclusion in the teaching learning process.

### **Activity 1: Just a minute**

- Take 10-15 small household objects like bangles, tooth paste, shaving cream, knife, one or two rupee coin, lipstick, pencils, socks etc. and place them in a tray.
- Put the tray on a table and keep it on the back side of the classroom.
- Ask each student to go one by one and let him or her observe the articles in the tray for a minute.
- When a student comes back ask him/her to recall the objects observed and then write down the names of the objects he/she can recall.
- Ask them to share one by one how many articles each of them could recall.

Have a discussion on the objects each student could recall, it is quite possible that a girl could recall stationary articles and a boy cosmetics and household articles. Give positive reinforcement for the type of articles they could recall, saying statements like.

- It seems that Ram helps his parents in household chores that is why he could recall more of household articles.
- Sunita has a keen interest in studies that is why she could recall more of stationary articles.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Improvement in the skill of observation,
- Improvement in the ability to recall,

- Exploration of area of interest of students,
- Learning about different types of objects, we come across in our surroundings and what are its uses,
- Removal of gender role stereotyping.

### **Activity 2: Think-Pair-Share**

Think pair share starts with the individual and finishes with the whole group.

- Provide the group/class a topic like how essential is water or road safety.
- Ask students to recall and write down points about what they already know about the topic.
- Ask students to make a pair with another student make sure that the pair includes a girl and a boy.
- Ask each pair to share their current understanding to reach an agreement.
- Finally ask them to share this information with the whole class, make sure that both boy and girls participate in the process of sharing.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Enhancement of thinking,
- Sharing of knowledge,
- Development of communication skills,
- Equal participation of boys, girls,
- Bringing out a boy's and a girl's perspective on different issues and learn from each others' experiences.

### **Activity 3: Introduce your partner**

- For a class of 20, make 20 slips. Take two slips at a time and write opposite words like Black-white, Day-night, Brother-sister, etc. Put each of these slips in a separate container.
- Ask the boys of the class to pick up slips from one container and the girls from another one.
- Ask students to read the word written on the slip and find out the student who is having the slip on which opposite word is written.
- This way you will make 10 pairs of boys and girls.

- Tell the pair to ask following questions to each other.

Your name?

Your father's name?

Your mother's name?

Number of siblings you have?

What each of your family member is doing ?

Your hobbies, interest, likes, dislikes etc.?

Now ask all the pairs to introduce each other on the basis of conversation they had

### **Learning Outcomes of the Activity**

- Rapport building,
- Provides concrete learning experiences in Environmental Studies on the topics like My family, A day in my life, My neighbourhood, etc.,
- Improvement in communication skill,
- Improvement in social personal qualities like sharing, cooperation and respect for each other.

## **1.18 EXEMPLAR GENDER INCLUSIVE EVALUATIVE PRACTICES**

### **(a) Group Assignments**

- Form groups of 6 students including both boys and girls and assign them tasks like preparing a write up on some given topic, collecting material related to a topic etc. When the end product is ready, evaluate it. Ask the groups to share the process by which each group finished the task given.
- Discuss how the quality of the end product depended upon the process the Group had followed.
- Discuss the importance of cooperation, equal contribution of group members and joint efforts for a qualitative work and assign marks or grades as per the above parameters.

### **(b) Maintenance of Environmental Studies/Subject Board**

- Form groups of 46 students including both boys and girls.
- Make a weekly schedule and ask each

group to maintain Environmental Studies board for a week.

- Use techniques like teacher evaluation, self evaluation and peer evaluation.

### **(c) Parameters for Evaluation**

- Effectiveness in planning.
- Use of time (how many times displayed material was changed in assigned time).
- Use of equipments and resources.
- Sensitivity to social issues in students of both the genders.
- Concerns for social institutions.
- Desire to work towards social improvement.
- Open mindedness.
- Expression of ideas and feelings by both the genders towards educational, mechanical, aesthetic, scientific, social, recreational, vocational activities.

### **Self-Reflection**

1. Devise some gender inclusive activities and evaluation practices?

---



---

## **1.19 SUGGESTIONS FOR TEXTBOOK DEVELOPERS**

**(a) Textual material should be de-constructed and gender should be incorporated in the very construction of knowledge.**

**(b) While writing the textbooks, the authors and publishers should keep in mind the following aspects:**

- (i) The incorporation of biases such as invisibility, stereotyping, imbalance/selectivity, unreality, fragmentation/isolation, linguistic bias, visual bias, cosmetic bias should not be a part of textbooks.
- (ii) Content allocation to male and female should be equal/balanced in textual material.
- (iii) More and such examples which

- contribute in building up a positive self-image of women may be included in the Elementary level textbook. Examples not contributing in building up a positive self-image may be avoided. Examples of women personalities which are a part of socio-cultural and historical reality in a given period of time, but which does not contribute in building up a positive self-image of women may be dropped during the theme selection for curriculum and syllabus at Elementary Level.
- (iv) More and more women must be shown in occupational roles and as a part of the work force as they really are. Examples of women in unconventional roles may be given to address stereotypes that exist in the society. Examples of occupation should either be gender friendly or gender neutral. Gender biased examples of occupations should not be given in the textbooks.
- (v) Linguistic bias in the textual material should be identified and avoided in the textual material developed for the students at any stage of education.
- (vi) Attributes of discourse behaviour stereotypical to male and female should be consciously avoided. Textbooks writers and publishers must know the characteristics of a gender biased language and their gender neutral alternatives.
- (vii) There should be equal representation of female and male characters in the texts as well as in the illustrations and 'add women and stir' approach leads to illusion of equality so this approach should be avoided while planning illustrations for textbooks. Illustrations should be relevant and meaningful wherein women should be shown as equal counterparts of male.
- (viii) The content on women should not be given in a manner which leads to the expression of women characters in terms of her physical beauty/ attributes. Women should not be characterised as a commodity to be lost as a part of political treaties because such characterisation leads to derogation.
- (ix) The number of male and female authors in textbook development team should be proportionate to avoid one sided construction of gender images. So, the selection of development team should be done in a manner that it has equal number of male and female authors to ensure the incorporation of a justified gender perspective.
- (x) Authors and publishers should be trained through gender sensitisation programmes and workshops for a smooth transaction of gender sensitive perspective through textbooks.

### 1.20 REFERENCES

- National Curriculum Framework, 1975. NCERT.
- National Curriculum Framework, 1987. NCERT.
- National Curriculum Framework, 1988. NCERT.
- National Curriculum Framework, 2000. NCERT.
- National Curriculum Framework, 2005. NCERT.
- National Curriculum Framework, 2005. Position Paper, National Focus Group on Gender Issues in Education.
- P. Baldwin and D. Baldwin. 1992. The Portrayal of Women in Classroom Textbooks. *Canadian Social Studies* 26: 3, 110-114.
- Kumar Indu. 2011. "Content Analysis on Gender Perspective of Elementary Level Environmental Studies/Social Science Text books of Rajasthan Board".

# Language and Gender

## Structure of the Module

- 2.1 Overview
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Objectives
- 2.4 Gender Stereotyping
- 2.5 Gender Neutral Language
- 2.6 Textbooks and Gender Neutrality
- 2.7 Use of Gender Neutral Language
- 2.8 References

### 2.1 OVERVIEW

According to UNESCO (2004), 'gender sensitivity helps to generate respect for the individual regardless of sex. Gender sensitivity is not about pitting women against men. On the contrary, education that is gender sensitive benefits members of both sexes. It helps them determine which assumptions in matters of gender are valid and which are stereotyped generalizations. Gender awareness requires not only intellectual effort but also sensitivity and open-mindedness. It opens up the widest possible range of life options for both women and men.' In the context of school education, gender sensitivity is a pedagogical concern which teachers should be aware of. Gender sensitive education can help learners overcome assumptions

and avoid generalized stereotypes. This will promote respect for the roles that both women and men play in their families, communities and the nation at large.

### 2.2 INTRODUCTION

Over a period of time, language has coded in its texture a large number of elements that perpetuate gender stereotypes. It is not just that many scholars, including some distinguished linguists, have described female speech as 'trivial' and 'a string of pearls' signifying nothing, but a substantial part of the lexicon and syntactic expressions encode gender-bias. Detailed analysis of male-female conversation has also revealed how men use a variety of conversational strategies to assert their point of view. The received notions of what it means to

be 'masculine' or 'feminine' are constantly reconstructed in our behavior and are, sometimes unwittingly, transmitted through our textbooks. In fact, the damage done by the 'gender construction of knowledge' is becoming increasingly obvious.

Language, including illustrations and other visual aids, play a central role in the formation of such knowledge and we need to pay immediate attention to this aspect of language. It is extremely important that textbook writers and teachers begin to appreciate that the passive and deferential roles generally assigned to women are socio-culturally constructed and need to be destroyed as quickly as possible. Voices of women in all their glory need to find a prominent place in our textbooks and teaching strategies.

A teacher plays a critical and crucial role in promoting gender fair language. Language influences both thought and behaviour directly and indirectly. Teachers need to pay attention when engaged in communication with their learners. This comprises addressing learners, developing activities and materials for reference and using language in general while interacting with parents and the community.

### 2.3 OBJECTIVES

- To differentiate between genderless and gender free language
- To use gender neutral language
- To identify gender biased attitudes and behaviour and correct them
- To understand and use visual-aids and illustrations etc that are gender sensitive
- To design gender friendly methodology and use it in the class
- To develop and use learning activities and materials fostering gender sensitivity.

### 2.4 GENDER STEREOTYPING

If we analyze languages carefully, we will find that a large number of elements

in languages are stereotypical. They perpetuate gender stereotypes. The use of words and expressions that imply that women are inferior to men become a part of our mindset. A detailed analysis of language further reveals that male-female conversations are different in many ways. Notions of masculine and feminine are constantly reconstructed in our behaviour. This is because the opportunities and avenues provided to males and females in our society are different. There is a need to break these barriers and evolve language that is gender inclusive. Passive and differential roles that are generally assigned to women need to be destroyed.

Gender is embedded thoroughly in our institutions, our actions, our beliefs etc., and it seems absolutely natural to us. For example, the statement 'The Chairman will address the gathering' would become inclusive if it read, 'The Chairperson will address the gathering'. Gender is ever present in conversation, humour and conflict.

Our society has always been a patriarchal society. Till the 18<sup>th</sup> century man primarily referred to males. Edmund Burke in his book, *French Revolution*, wrote (both sexes) in parenthesis whenever he used the term 'man' to convey that he was referring to both men and women.

### 2.5 GENDER NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

Gender-neutral language should not be confused with genderless language, which refers to languages without grammatical gender.

Let us take as an example of the word 'man'. 'Man' is not a generic word. We need to think about alternatives to words such as 'man'. Some of the alternatives are – 'human beings', 'humans' or 'humanity'. Our language should be gender inclusive and gender neutral. In such situations, epicene words such as humans, persons, individuals, etc. should be used. A conscious

### Activities

A few words have been given below. Write their gender neutral forms in the space provided below. You can cross-check your responses with the list given at the end of this module.

1. Stewardess \_\_\_\_\_
2. Policeman \_\_\_\_\_
3. Mailman \_\_\_\_\_
4. Chairman \_\_\_\_\_
5. Spokesman \_\_\_\_\_
6. Anchor man \_\_\_\_\_
7. Poetess \_\_\_\_\_
8. Actress \_\_\_\_\_
9. Man, Mankind \_\_\_\_\_
10. Manpower \_\_\_\_\_
11. Wife or Husband \_\_\_\_\_
12. Mothering \_\_\_\_\_
13. Foreman \_\_\_\_\_
14. Salesmanship \_\_\_\_\_
15. Housewife \_\_\_\_\_

effort on our part needs to be made. There is scope for parallel use of terms and it is achievable.

Gender-neutral language argues that language is rich in alternatives that speakers and writers can use. There is a growing awareness that language does not merely reflect the way we think, it also shapes our thinking because language is a powerful tool.

### 2.6 TEXTBOOKS AND GENDER NEUTRALITY

According to the Position Paper of the National Focus Group on Teaching of Indian Languages (NCERT 2006), "The received notions of what it means to be 'masculine' or 'feminine' are constantly 'reconstructed in our behaviour and are, sometimes unwittingly perhaps, transmitted through our textbooks." Many studies of school

textbooks in various countries have shown that female participants are outnumbered by male and perform a limited range of roles, mainly in the domestic and nurturing domains (Cincotta, 1978; Porreca, 1984; Gupta and Lee, 1990; Law and Chan, 2004).

Both written texts and visual illustrations exhibit the domination of male figures. Women are mainly depicted as working in the home, engaged in household chores or in traditional women's work – as teachers, nurses, models or clerks, while men participate in 'active' pursuits outside the home, as in the workplace, in sports and recreational activities.

Given that students are frequently required to assimilate the materials of their textbooks in detail, they have the potential to influence the development of students' language at an impressionable age. Also, much of our language curriculum involves



Examples of stereotyped illustrations of women and men

patterned structures and mechanical drills which, if based on gender-typed material, may well contribute to the development of sexist attitudes at a subconscious level.

However, a mere increase in the number of female figures or characters in textbooks will not change people's sexist attitudes if the traditional stereotypes still prevail. A common manifestation of sexism in language is the 'generic' use of the masculine nouns (e.g. *man*, *policeman*) and masculine pronouns (e.g. *him*, *he*) when they refer to people in general or when the sex of the referent is unknown. Many educationists and social scientists now-a-days oppose this use because (1) it is confusing to people whether the forms include both males and females or whether they refer to males only, and (2) studies have shown that people rarely conceptualise females when masculine 'generics' are used. Masculine generics may generally be avoided in the textbooks by adopting the strategy of using paired pronoun expressions such as *he/she*, *him/her*, *his/her*, and *s/he*.

In addition to pronoun choice, we should also be sensitive to the use of gender-neutral lexical terms. Thus we can achieve gender neutralization; that is, the avoidance of pseudo-generics such as *-man* compounds (e.g. *chairman*, *spokesman*, *salesman*, *foreman*) and of marked forms

(e.g. *female doctor*, *female teacher*), and the use of symmetric phrases such as *female and male journalists*, and *cameraman/camerawoman*, and so on. Similarly, honorifics like *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, and *Miss*, have changed to *Mr.* and *Ms.* so that attention is not drawn to gender roles.

We also need to be careful about the use of pictures/illustrations while depicting the roles of men and women. One may find that pictures reinforce traditionally gendered roles: there are more females than males engaging in various kinds of household chores. On the other hand, there are more male characters performing non-household activities, such as work and play.

## 2.7 USE OF GENDER NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

What we need now are various strategies to avoid biased or stereotypical treatment of the two sexes – the use of gender-inclusive terms, alternative pronouns such as *he or she*, symmetrical phrases to include both males and females, representation of women in a wider range of activities and careers beyond stereotypical images, and equal visibility of female and male characters with a wider range of occupational roles and personal traits. As the Position Paper of the National Focus Group on Teaching of Indian Languages (NCERT 2005 suggests, "It is

extremely important that textbook writers and teachers begin to appreciate that the passive and deferential roles generally assigned to women are socio-culturally constructed and need to be destroyed as quickly as possible. The voices of women in all their glory need to find a prominent place in our textbooks and teaching strategies.”

#### **Avoid language that:**

- has innuendos (double-meaning)
- is offensive
- is discriminatory
- is derogatory

#### **Activities**

Rewrite the sentences given below using gender free language. Answers for the same have been given at the end of the module for self-assessment.

1. A professor should correct his students' papers according to this set of predetermined guidelines.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. From the beginning of time, mankind used horses in one way or another.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Are there any freshmen who would like to work in the Writing Center?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The stewardess served the chicken tikka to the pompous gentleman.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Shalini was hoping a doctor would give his opinion.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. She aspires to become a career woman.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Danish's grandmother lives by old wives' tales.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The authoress, Mary Higgins Clark, hosted a book signing at Barnes and Noble.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Ask Harsh's mother to pack him a better lunch in the future.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Jordan and the other girls from the office devoured the snacks.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Examples of Gender Sensitive Textual Material

Textbooks in English which are based on the syllabus developed as a follow up to NCF-2005 have taken into account the above considerations in selection of materials, illustrations, activities etc.

The selection of texts has a fair representation of women writers, not only from the west but women writers from India have been given due space as well. The selection includes stories and articles written by women writers and also about them. Writers such as Kamala Das, Bama, Sujatha Bhatt, Tishani Doshi, Vasantha Surya, Shardha Dwivedi, etc. have been included in the selection. Stories about women such as Kalpana Chawla, Zitkala Sa, Santosh Yadav, Anne Frank etc. have also been included.

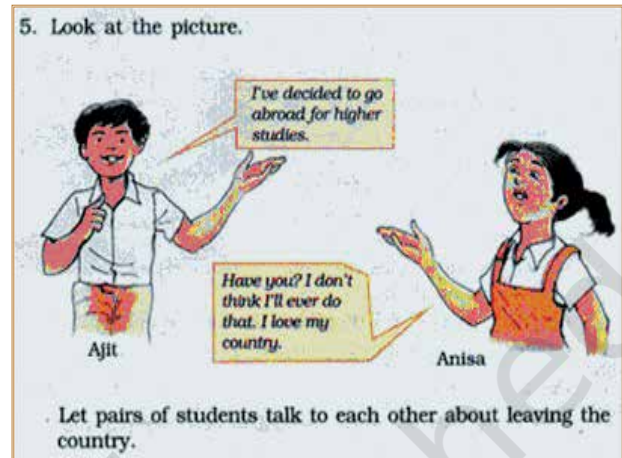
Care has been taken that illustrations do not depict stereotypical images. An example from Class IX textbook *Beehive* (Lesson 1 – The Fun They Had) is given below.



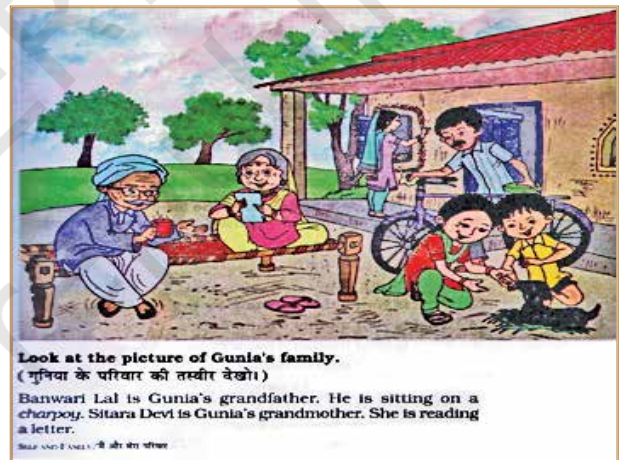
Example of a gender inclusive illustration

The activities have also been designed in such a manner that there is a lot of scope for pair work, group work and sharing of ideas, thereby giving an equal opportunity to both boys and girls to share their ideas and learn together. The following activity

from the Class VII textbook *Honeycomb* (Lesson 5 - Quality) is one such example.



Example of an illustration that depicts equality in interactions



Look at the picture of Gunia's family.  
(गुनिया के परिवार की तस्वीर देखो।)  
Banwari Lal is Gunia's grandfather. He is sitting on a charpoy. Sitara Devi is Gunia's grandmother. She is reading a letter.

Example of an illustration of a family where gender roles are not stereotyped

Activities given for discussion will also make students aware of gender equality. Let us take the example of a short story 'Bholi' by A.K. Abbas from the Supplementary Reader for Class X – *Footprints without Feet*. This story is about a neglected girl child. It deals with a girl child's right to education. It is through questions for discussion that the social issue of educating the girl child has been brought out.

### Talk about it

1. Bholi's teacher helped her overcome social barriers by encouraging and motivating her. How do you think you can contribute towards changing the social attitudes illustrated in this story?
2. Should girls be aware of their rights, and assert them? Should girls and boys have the same rights, duties and privileges? What are some of the ways in which society treats them differently? When we speak of 'human rights', do we differentiate between girls' rights and boys' rights?

### Sample Activities

We have direct noun to pronoun relationships, but what about nouns like 'teachers', 'students' etc.? Therefore, in our textual materials both 'he/she' have been used.

### 2.8 REFERENCES

- Aksornkool Namtip. (2004). *Gender Sensitivity: A Training Manual*. Eds. Cindy Joerger and Elaine Taylor. Paris: UNESCO.
- Gender Free Language <http://a4esl.org/q/h/dt/genderfree.html> accessed on 28/9/2011 at 8:12 AM IST
- National Council of Educational Research and Training, (2005). *National Curriculum Framework 2005*. NCERT: New Delhi.
- National Council of Educational Research and Training (2005). *National*

*Focus Group on Teaching English, Position Paper*. NCERT: New Delhi.

### Suggested Readings

- Janet, Jenkins (1995). *Producing Gender Sensitive Learning Materials*. Canada: The Commonwealth of Learning.
- Madhumita, Bandyopadhyay & Ramya, Subramanian (2008). *Gender Equity in Education: A Review of Trends and Factors*. CREATE Pathways to Access. *Research Monograph 8*, April, UK: University of Sussex
- Oyeniya, Oyebola. *Gender Issues in Textbook Development: A Study of Gender Balance in Illustrations of Selected Textbooks for Upper Primary Level*. Abuja: Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council.

## पाठ्येतर सामग्री और जेंडर संवेदनशीलता

### अध्याय का ढाँचा

- 3.1 विवरण
- 3.2 प्रस्तावना
- 3.3 उद्देश्य
- 3.4 पाठ्येतर सामग्री की आवश्यकता
- 3.5 पाठ्येतर सामग्री का चयन
- 3.6 जेंडर संवेदनशीलता और क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला – बरखा
- 3.7 पाठ्येतर सामग्री – चित्र, कविता, कहानी आदि
- 3.8 शिक्षक की भूमिका
- 3.9 संदर्भ

### 3.1 विवरण

एक शिक्षक का उत्तरदायित्व केवल विषय का ज्ञान देना ही नहीं है बल्कि बच्चों में परस्पर सद्भाव, परिवेशीय सजगता, संवेदनशीलता आदि का विकास करना भी है। सीखने-सिखाने की प्रक्रिया के दौरान पाठ्यपुस्तक के साथ-साथ पाठ्येतर सामग्री का भी उपयोग किया जाए, तो बच्चों में मूल्यों के विकास के साथ-साथ सीखना आनंददायी बनाया जा सकता है। जेंडर का मुद्दा मानवता का मुद्दा है। जेंडर संबंधी मुद्दों के प्रति सकारात्मक सोच लाने में पाठ्येतर सामग्री एक बहुत अच्छा साधन बन सकती है। पाठ्येतर सामग्री की आवश्यकता क्या है? इसका चयन कैसे करें? पाठ्येतर सामग्री के उपयोग में शिक्षक की भूमिका आदि की चर्चा यहाँ की जा रही है।

### 3.2 प्रस्तावना

संविधान के अंतर्गत धर्म, जाति, वंश और लिंग आदि आधारों पर सबको समानता का अधिकार दिया गया है। स्वतंत्र भारत में बदलते समाज के साथ महिलाओं की स्थिति में भी बदलाव आया है। उनकी साक्षरता दर बढ़ी है, वे आत्मनिर्भर हुई हैं, प्रत्येक कार्य क्षेत्र में उन्होंने अपनी पहचान बनाकर यह सिद्ध कर दिया है कि समान अवसर मिले तो वे आसमान की बुलंदियों को छू सकती हैं। लेकिन इन बदलावों के बावजूद महिलाओं को लेकर हमारी सामाजिक मान्यताओं, परंपराओं, मानक व्यवहारों और सोच में अपेक्षित बदलाव नहीं आया है।

लिंग आधारित भेदभाव जनित रूढ़िग्रस्त मानसिकता में बदलाव लाना एक चुनौती है। इस चुनौती का सामना शिक्षा

व्यवस्था में सुनियोजित बदलाव लाकर किया जा सकता है। इसके लिए अनेक प्रयास भी किए जा रहे हैं। सर्व शिक्षा अभियान के अंतर्गत बालिका शिक्षा पर विशेष ध्यान दिया जा रहा है। बीच में ही पाठशाला त्यागने वाली बालिकाओं के लिए कस्तूरबा गांधी बालिका विद्यालय जैसी योजना की शुरुआत भी की गई है। पाठ्यचर्या, पाठ्यक्रम तथा पाठ्यपुस्तकों में भी इस बात का विशेष रूप से ध्यान रखा जा रहा है कि लैंगिक समानता के दृष्टिकोण का विकास करने वाली विषय सामग्री का समावेश इनमें किया जाए।

पाठ्यपुस्तकें शिक्षण का एक साधन हैं, एकमात्र साधन नहीं। शिक्षण प्रक्रिया के दौरान पाठ्यपुस्तकों के साथ-साथ पाठ्येतर सामग्री का भी उपयोग किया जाए तो सीखने की प्रक्रिया को रोचक बनाया जा सकता है। विशेषतः लिंग संबंधी मुद्दों के लिए जहाँ संवेदनशीलता अति आवश्यक है, इस प्रकार की पाठ्येतर सामग्री के माध्यम से कक्षा में इन मुद्दों पर चर्चा की जा सकती है।

### 3.3 उद्देश्य

इस मॉड्यूल को पढ़ने के बाद आप -

- राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या की रूपरेखा-2005 में पाठ्येतर सामग्री के संबंध में की गयी संस्तुतियों से अवगत होंगे।
- पाठ्येतर सामग्री की आवश्यकता, चयन तथा सीखने-सिखाने की प्रक्रिया में उसके उपयोग से परिचित होंगे।
- बच्चों में पाठ्येतर सामग्री द्वारा जेण्डर संवेदनशीलता का विकास कर सकेंगे।
- बच्चों में दिन-प्रतिदिन की परिस्थितियों, जेंडर के मुद्दों के प्रति सकारात्मक सोच उत्पन्न कर सकेंगे।

### 3.4 पाठ्येतर सामग्री की आवश्यकता

आमतौर पर पाठ्यपुस्तक को पाठ्यचर्या की मुख्य कार्यस्थली माना जाता है। यह सच है कि पाठ्यपुस्तक बच्चों को तथ्यात्मक विषयगत जानकारी के साथ अंतःक्रिया के अवसर भी देती है। लेकिन पाठ्यपुस्तकों के साथ अन्य सामग्री भी विकसित की जाए तो पाठ्यचर्या को और भी रोचक तथा ग्रहणीय बनाया जा सकता है। अतिरिक्त पठन सामग्री की

आवश्यकता को कोई भी नकार नहीं सकता है। राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या की रूपरेखा-2005 पाठ्यपुस्तकों के अतिरिक्त अन्य पठन सामग्री की आवश्यकता पर बल देती है। पढ़ने की संस्कृति के विकास के क्रम में वैयक्तिक पठन को प्रोत्साहित किए जाने की आवश्यकता है और शिक्षकों को इस संस्कृति का हिस्सा बनकर स्वयं उदाहरण पेश करना चाहिए। इसके लिए स्कूल और सामुदायिक स्तर पर पुस्तकालयों को बढ़ावा देने की ज़रूरत है। यह मान्यता कि कथा-उपन्यास पढ़ना समय नष्ट करना है, पठन को हतोत्साहित करने का बड़ा कारण है। सभी स्कूली विषयों और स्कूल के सभी स्तरों पर पूरक पठन-सामग्री का विकास और उनकी आपूर्ति की तत्काल आवश्यकता है। इस प्रकार की काफ़ी सामग्री बाजार में उपलब्ध है, यद्यपि उनकी गुणवत्ता में काफ़ी अंतर है, परंतु उनका कक्षा में पठन-पाठन के दौरान उपयोग किया जा सकता है। कक्षा में व्यवस्थित रूप से ऐसी सामग्री का उपयोग किया जाए तो विषयों के शिक्षण में विस्तार होगा। लेकिन विद्यालयों में पढ़ने का संबंध केवल पाठ्यपुस्तकों तक ही सीमित होकर रह जाता है। शिक्षक सोचते हैं कि पुस्तकों को पढ़ाना ही पाठ्यक्रम पूर्ण करना है और यही उनका लक्ष्य है। अभिभावक भी स्कूल से यही अपेक्षा रखते हैं। स्कूल बच्चों को इस तरह पढ़ना नहीं सीखा पाते कि वे अपने आप किताबें ढूँढ़ें और जानकारी के लिए पढ़ें, आनंद के लिए पढ़ें और उनमें पढ़ने की स्थायी रुचि विकसित हो। राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या की रूपरेखा-2005 शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रमों में शिक्षकों को ऐसी सामग्री से परिचित कराए जाने की आवश्यकता और उन्हें ऐसे मानदंड बताए जाने की ज़रूरत की संस्तुति करती है ताकि वे प्रभावी ढंग से पठन सामग्री का चुनाव और उपयोग कर सकें।

पाठ्यपुस्तक से इतर पाठ्यसामग्री बच्चों को बहुत आकर्षित करती है। इसका प्रमुख कारण यह है कि इन्हें पढ़ने के दौरान बच्चों को इस बात की चिंता नहीं रहती कि पढ़ने के बाद प्रश्न पूछे जाएँगे। इसके साथ ही पाठ्येतर सामग्री अवकाश के समय में पढ़ने के लिए या मनोरंजन के साधन के रूप में प्रयोग की जाती है जिस कारण बच्चे बिना लोभ के, पढ़ने के लिए पढ़ना या खेल के लिए इन्हें पढ़ते हैं। दूसरा कारण इनका स्वरूप है। रोचक कविता और कहानी की किताबें सहज ही

बच्चों में पढ़ने की ललक जाग्रत करती हैं। पाठ्येतर सामग्री का आकार पाठ्यपुस्तक की भाँति एक निश्चित ढाँचे में नहीं होता। विभिन्न आकार की किताबें बच्चों को अच्छी लगती हैं। पाठ्यपुस्तक से हटकर इनमें चित्र भी रंगीन तथा बड़े होते हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त इनमें विधाओं का फलक विस्तृत होता है। कहानी, कविता, नाटक बच्चों को अच्छे लगते हैं। किताबें यदि कहानी की हों तो बच्चों की खुशी का ठिकाना नहीं रहता। कहानियाँ बच्चों को लुभाती हैं और कहानियाँ यदि उनके अपने परिवेश, जीवन से जुड़ी हों तथा कहानियों के ताने-बाने में लड़के-लड़कियों के एक साथ खेलने-कूदने, तरह-तरह की शरारतें करते, एक तरह के खेल खेलने, लड़कियों द्वारा अपनी बात का मान रखवाने जैसी बातें बुनी गई हों तो नन्हे बच्चों के दिलों में लैंगिक समानता का भाव पनपते देर नहीं लगती। एक बार यह भाव मन-मस्तिष्क में एक गहरी समझ के साथ अंकुरित हो गया तो ताउम्र बना रहता है।

### स्वयं चिंतन

1. राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या की रूपरेखा-2005 पाठ्येतर सामग्री की आवश्यकता पर क्यों बल देती है?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. पाठ्येतर सामग्री पाठ्यपुस्तकों से किस प्रकार भिन्न है?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. क्या आपने शिक्षण के दौरान पाठ्येतर सामग्री का प्रयोग किया है, शिक्षण-अधिगम के संदर्भ में उस सामग्री का विश्लेषण/विवेचन कीजिए।  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3.5 पाठ्येतर सामग्री का चयन

पाठ्येतर सामग्री अपनी विविधता और रोचकता के कारण बच्चों को आनंदप्रद लगती है। इसलिए विषय ज्ञान देने के साथ ही बच्चों में मूल्यों के विकास हेतु इसका उपयोग किया जा सकता है। सर्वप्रथम यह जानना जरूरी है कि किस प्रकार की अतिरिक्त पठन-सामग्री का चयन किया जाए जो कि बच्चों में लैंगिक समानता के प्रति सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण विकसित करे।

### चयन के आधार बिंदु

- पाठ्येतर सामग्री बच्चों की आयु, रुचि तथा परिवेश के अनुकूल हो।
- भाषा सरल तथा सरस हो।
- विधाओं का विस्तृत फलक हो। विभिन्न विधाएँ कविता, कहानी, नाटक, भेंटवार्ता, समाचार, लोककथा, लोकगीत आदि का चयन बच्चों की भाषा की कक्षा में रुचि बनाए रखने में सहायक होगा।
- आमतौर पर किताबों में लड़कों को साहसी कार्य करते, अपनी विवेकशीलता का परिचय देते, निर्णय लेते दर्शाया जाता है और लड़कियों के कार्यक्षेत्र का दायरा घरेलू कार्यों, उनकी दूसरों पर निर्भरता, उनमें निर्णय लेने की क्षमता का सर्वथा अभाव दिखाया जाता है। लड़कों के मर्दानगी (पुरुषार्थ) से भरपूर कार्यों का चित्रण होता है जो कहीं-न-कहीं लैंगिक रूढ़िबद्धता को बढ़ावा देता है और साथ ही लैंगिक असमानता को बढ़ावा देता है। ऐसी किताबों का चयन करें जो इन परंपराओं को तोड़ती हों, जिनकी बालिका पात्र वे सब कार्य करती हैं जो उनके समवयस्क लड़के करते हैं। साथ ही यदि किताब पितृसत्ता या पुरुष वर्चस्व व रूढ़िबद्धता को दर्शाती भी है तो बच्चों के सामने सवाल खड़े किये जा सकते हैं। यह आवश्यक नहीं कि बिना सवाल किए मान ली गई परंपराओं में बदलाव की आवश्यकता नहीं। इस विषय में संवेदनशीलता बदलाव के लिए एक पहल हो सकती है। इसलिए बच्चों को आपस में चर्चा करने का मौका मिले। बच्चे तर्क दें। अपने विचार स्वतंत्र रूप से अभिव्यक्त करें। कक्षा तथा कक्षा के बाहर बच्चों द्वारा की गयी चर्चा उनकी सोच में सकारात्मक बदलाव अवश्य लाएगी।
- ऐसी अनेक किताबें सुलभ हैं जिनमें वीर महिलाओं जैसे-रानी लक्ष्मीबाई, रानी दुर्गाबाई, कित्तूर की रानी चेनम्मा आदि की गाथाएँ हैं। प्रत्येक वर्ष गणतंत्र दिवस के अवसर पर वीर बच्चों को पुरस्कृत किया जाता है। सभी प्रमुख पत्र-पत्रिकाओं में इन बच्चों द्वारा किए गए साहसिक कार्यों का उल्लेख रहता है। साहसी बालिकाओं से संबंधित सामग्री एकत्रित कर कक्षा में उस पर बातचीत

करें तो ऐसी सामग्री निश्चित ही पाठक बच्चों को भी ऐसा ही कुछ साहसिक कदम उठाने की प्रेरणा देगी। साथ ही अपने अंदर निहित शक्तियों को टटोलने का एक मौका भी देगी। कई बार लोग क्या कहेंगे? ऐसा सोचकर क्षमता होते हुए भी हम उस कार्य को करने का संबल नहीं जुटा पाते। ऐसी स्थिति में इस प्रकार की पाठ्येतर सामग्री बच्चों को विशेष रूप से बालिकाओं को आत्मविश्वासपूर्वक निर्णय लेने और कदम उठाने की ओर अग्रसर करेगी।

- इसी प्रकार शिक्षा, राजनीति, विज्ञान, खेल आदि विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में विशिष्ट योगदान करने वाली महिलाओं से संबंधित सामग्री का कक्षा में उपयोग जहाँ बालिकाओं के हृदय में कुछ विशेष करने की भावना का संचार करेगा वहीं बालकों को भी यह अहसास कराएगा कि समय और समान अवसर मिलें तो लड़कियाँ भी बहुत कुछ कर सकती हैं। बालक भी कई ऐसे कार्य करने के लिए उत्सुक व आतुर हो सकते हैं, जो सामाजिक मान्यताओं व रूढ़िबद्धता के कारण उनके लिए वर्जित हैं।
- सांस्कृतिक दृष्टि से भारत बहुत समृद्ध है। यहाँ हर प्रदेश में अपनी लोककथाएँ हैं। आमतौर पर लोककथाओं में नारी पात्रों को लेकर पूर्वाग्रह हैं। लेकिन अनेक लोककथाएँ ऐसी हैं जिनमें नारी पात्रों को अपनी सूझ-बूझ का परिचय देते हुए वीरतापूर्ण कारनामे करते चित्रित किया गया है। ऐसी ही लोककथाओं का चयन करें। ऐसी लोककथाओं को सुनने/पढ़ने के दौरान बच्चों के हृदय में स्वतः ही यह सोच विकसित होती है कि महिलाएँ बहादुरी में किसी से कम नहीं हैं। इस प्रकार की कुछ लोककथाओं के उपयोग के बाद ऐसी लोककथाएँ भी बच्चों को सुनायी जा सकती हैं अथवा उन्हें पढ़ने को दी जा सकती हैं जिनमें नारी पात्र की छवि सकारात्मक नहीं है। लोककथा सुनाने/पढ़ने के बाद बच्चों से उस नारी पात्र के बारे में चर्चा की जा सकती है। पूर्व में पठित नारी की सकारात्मक छवि वाली लोककथाएँ निश्चित रूप से बच्चों को चर्चा करने के लिए प्रेरित करेंगी और वे स्वयं ही अपनी बात कहने को

उद्यत होंगे। इस प्रकार की चर्चाएँ एक अच्छा माध्यम है। कक्षागत वाद-विवाद के जरिए यदि किसी निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचा जाए तो वह तर्कसंगत होगा व लंबे समय तक मानस पटल पर रहेगा।

### स्वयं चिंतन

1. लोककथाएँ किस प्रकार जेंडर के प्रति स्वस्थ दृष्टिकोण में सहायक हैं? एक उदाहरण द्वारा दर्शाएँ।  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. लैंगिक समानता के दृष्टिकोण के विकास हेतु किस प्रकार की पाठ्येतर सामग्री का चयन करना चाहिए?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3.6 जेंडर संवेदनशीलता और क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला बरखा

अतिरिक्त पठन सामग्री के रूप में पहली और दूसरी कक्षा के बच्चों के लिए राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्, नयी दिल्ली द्वारा विकसित **क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला-बरखा** की चालीस कहानियाँ पाँच कथावस्तुओं में पिरोई गई हैं। बच्चों के जीवन से जुड़ी ये कहानियाँ बच्चों को अनुमान लगाकर पढ़ने का अवसर देती हैं, साथ ही जेंडर के मुद्दे को लेकर स्वस्थ दृष्टिकोण का विकास भी अत्यंत सहजता से करती हैं। इसलिए पुस्तकमाला की कहानियाँ यहाँ उदाहरण स्वरूप दी जा रही हैं।

#### (अ) बुद्धि कौशल का परिचय देती बालिकाएँ





**बरखा की कहानियों में गूँजते बालक-बालिकाओं के समान स्वर** — कहानियाँ चाहे वे पाठ्यक्रम के पन्नों पर छपी हों या पाठ्येतर किताबों में इनमें अधिकतर तर्कसंगतता, सोचने और तरकीब सुझाने जैसे बुद्धि कौशल से भरपूर कार्य अधिकतर लड़कों के ही जिम्मे रहते हैं। इसके पीछे रूढ़िग्रस्त सोच रहती है कि चिंतन कौशल से लड़कियों का क्या वास्ता? बरखा की कहानियों ने इस मिथक को तोड़ा है। बरखा की पाँच कथावस्तुओं की बालिका पात्र बबली, तोसिया, मिली बुद्धि, चातुर्य, सूझ-बूझ में अपनी सानी नहीं रखतीं। कहानी **झूला** में जीत कहता है कि उसे झूला झूलने में बहुत मज़ा आता है। जीत और बबली झूला ढूँढ़ने लगते हैं। दोनों पेड़ की डाली पर लटककर झूलते हैं, पर उन्हें ज्यादा मज़ा नहीं आता। फिर लोहे के पाइप पर लटककर झूलते हैं। इतने में बबली की नज़र एक टायर पर पड़ती है। उसे झट एक तरकीब सूझती है कि क्यों न टायर को लटकाकर उसे ही झूला बनाया जाए! वह टायर को हवा में उछालती है। टायर पेड़ की डाली पर जाकर लटक जाता है। जीत उछलकर टायर पर बैठ जाता है और बबली पीछे से धीरे-धीरे उसे झूलाने लगती है। इस प्रकार इस कहानी में बबली न केवल अपनी बुद्धि का परिचय देकर झूलने का तरीका सुझाती है बल्कि टायर को उछालकर पेड़ में लटकाती है और झूला बनाती है। इतना ही नहीं अगर यह कहानी आम पारंपरिक कहानी होती तो इसमें लड़की झूले पर बैठती और लड़का उसे झुलाता पर इस कहानी में बबली जीत के झूले पर बैठने पर झूले को झुलाती भी है। ऐसा भी नहीं है कि हमारे आस-पास ऐसा नहीं होता है या होता था, किंतु इस प्रकार के उदाहरणों को प्रायः नज़रअंदाज़ करने की एक प्रवृत्ति दिखती

है। यह पुस्तकमाला अपवाद स्वरूप समानता के भाव को संजोये हुए काफ़ी हद तक वास्तविकता को उजागर करती है।

इसी प्रकार से सूझ-बूझ का परिचय बबली देती है कहानी **आउट** में। वह क्रिकेट खेलने का प्रस्ताव रखती है।



खेलते-खेलते गेंद खोजने पर जीत के कहने पर कि गेंद तो है ही नहीं, वह कपड़े की कतरनों से गेंद बनाती है। **बबली का बाजा** कहानी में भी घर की सफ़ाई के दौरान बबली को एक डिब्बा मिलता है जिसे बजाने पर वह बजता है। उस डिब्बे के अंदर चावल के दाने हैं। बबली उस डिब्बे को लेकर सो



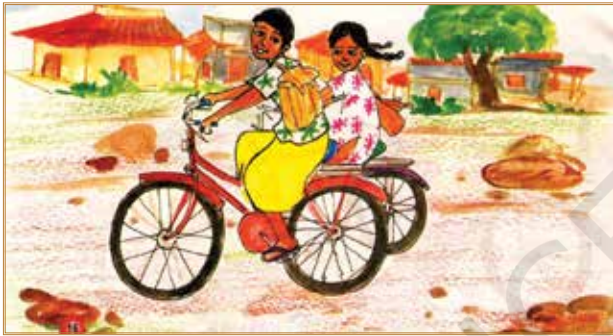
जाती है। रात में चूहा चावल खा लेता है। दूसरे दिन बबली माँ से चावल माँगती है तो माँ कहती हैं कि चावल खेलने की चीज़ नहीं है। बबली उदास हो जाती है। वह छत पर जाती है। रस्सी पर टंगे कपड़ों को देखकर उसे एक उपाय सूझता है। वह सलवार से नाड़े को निकालकर डिब्बे के दोनों ओर छेदकर बाँधती है और ढोलक बना देती है।

इस प्रकार अपनी तत्पर बुद्धि से समस्या को सुलझाती हुई ये नन्हीं बालिकाएँ अपनी हमउम्र पाठक बालिकाओं को

भी ऐसा ही कुछ करने का संदेश तो देती हैं साथ ही बच्चों के हृदय में भी यह बात बैठा देती हैं कि लड़कियाँ किसी भी दृष्टि में लड़कों से हीनतर नहीं हैं। अवसर मिले तो सब कुछ कर सकती हैं। बहुत-सी लड़कियाँ बबली की तरह सोचती होंगी पर अवसरों व प्रोत्साहन के अभाव में अपनी समझ, तथा कौशल को उजागर नहीं कर पातीं।

### (ब) स्वतंत्र अस्तित्व रखती बालिकाएँ

आज लड़कियाँ हर क्षेत्र में लड़कों से बराबर का मुकाबला कर रहीं हैं। वे किसी भी कार्य में लड़कों से पीछे नहीं हैं। वे हर काम करना चाहती हैं, सब कुछ सीखने की ललक उनमें है। **मिली की साइकिल** कहानी में मिली की साइकिल सीखने



की इच्छा, फिर उसका साइकिल सीखना आज की लड़की का सजीव चित्रण है। मिली की माँ द्वारा साइकिल सीखने में उसकी मदद करना भी आज के समाज की हर भारतीय माँ को प्रतिनिधित्व करता है जो चाहती है कि उसकी बेटी आगे बढ़े और समय की रफ्तार से चले। मिली अपने व्यवहार से पाठक बच्चों को अनेक संदेश देती है। मिली को छोटे खुले बाल रखना पसंद है। उसकी माँ जब उसकी चोटी गूँथती तो उसे दर्द होता। एक दिन वह एक तरकीब लड़ाती है और अपने पिता के संग बाजार जाकर बाल कटवा कर आती है। लौटकर घर आने पर माँ प्यार से उसके बालों में हाथ फेरकर उसे गले लगा लेती है। इस प्रकार मिली की अपनी इच्छा का मान रह जाता है। वह जता देती है कि उसका भी अपना स्वतंत्र अस्तित्व है, अपनी इच्छाएँ हैं, पसंद-नापसंद है जिनका ध्यान रखा जाना चाहिए।

### (स) मिल-जुलकर कार्य करने वाले बालक पात्र

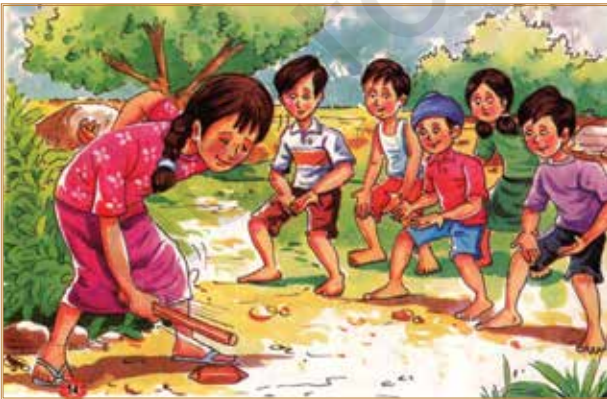
घर और रसोई से संबंधित काम लड़कियों के ही लायक माने जाते हैं और अक्सर कहानी की किताबों में महिला पात्र ही ये सब करते दिखाई दिए जाते हैं। लेकिन बरखा के बाल पात्र जमाल और मदन रसोई के कार्यों में भरपूर रुचि लेते हैं। **चाय**



कहानी में जमाल के जुकाम से पीड़ित होने पर उसका दोस्त मदन उसके लिए अदरक, काली मिर्च की चाय बनाता है। **फूली रोटी** में जमाल रोटी बनाने की कोशिश करता है और रोटी के फूलने पर बड़े गर्व से कहता है कि रोटी उसने बनायी है। **भुट्टा** कहानी में घर में मेहमानों के आने पर माता-पिता की अनुपस्थिति में जमाल और मदन न केवल उनका स्वागत करते हैं बल्कि उनके लिए भुट्टा भी उबालते/भूनेते हैं। **चावल** कहानी में भी जमाल और मदन चावल बनाते हैं। **पत्तल** कहानी में सभी बच्चे मिलकर पत्तल ढूँढ़ने का काम करते हैं। इस प्रकार बरखा की कहानियाँ सभी बच्चों में मिल-बाँटकर घर के कामों में हाथ बटाने की भावना जगाती हैं।

#### (द) खेल में अगुवाई करती बालिकाएँ

बच्चों को खेलना अच्छा लगता है। इसलिए बच्चों की कहानियों में खेल जरूर शामिल रहते हैं। बरखा की चालीस कहानियों में भी बच्चों के खेलने-कूदने का चित्रण है। पर विशेषता यही है कि इन कहानियों में लड़कियों के खेल केवल गुड़िया खेलने या घर के अंदर खेले जाने वाले खेल खेलने तक



सीमित नहीं हैं। वे कभी पतंग उड़ाती हैं तो कभी गिल्ली-डंडा भी खेलती दिखाई पड़ती हैं। खेल में अगुवाई भी करती हैं। **गिल्ली-डंडा** कहानी में खेलने के दौरान गिल्ली तालाब में गिर जाती है तो बबली तालाब में कूदकर गिल्ली निकालती है और जोर से डंडा घुमाकर गिल्ली को हवा में उछाल देती है। इसी प्रकार **छुपन-छुपई** कहानी में नाजिया खेल के दौरान ऊपर से कूदकर धप्पा करती है।

पतंग उड़ाना जैसे कुछ खेलों पर लड़कों का ही वर्चस्व छाया रहता है। अगर इनसे संबंधित किसी कहानी में बालिका पात्र हो तो वह या तो भाई के लिए मांझा तैयार करती है या भाई के पतंग उड़ाने के दौरान उसे मांझा पकड़े दिखाया जाता है। **हमारी पतंग** कहानी इस भ्रम को भी तोड़ती है कि पतंग लड़के ही उड़ा सकते हैं। इस कहानी में तोसिया और मिली पतंग उड़ाने का भरपूर मजा लेती हैं और उनकी पतंगें आसमान छूती हैं। वह अपनी माँ के साथ मिलकर पतंग उड़ाती है। यह एक लैंगिक मिथक तोड़ने का अच्छा उदाहरण हो सकता है जो प्रायः लड़कियों के लिए गैर-पारंपरिक माने जाने वाले खेल में माँ की स्वीकृति एवं भागीदारी को दर्शाता है।

**बरखा** की कहानियों में खेल के दौरान लड़कियाँ लड़कों से आगे भी रहती हैं। **आउट** कहानी में बबली कपड़े की कतरनों से गेंद बनाती है। वह गेंद उठाती है, जीत बल्ला उठाता है। गेंद खुलकर हवा में फैल जाती है तो बबली उछलकर कपड़ा पकड़कर चिल्लाती है- आउट। इस प्रकार विजयश्री का ताज बबली ही पहनती है।



### (इ) समान अवसर प्राप्त करती बालिकाएँ

हमारे समाज में अधिकतर लड़कियों के लिए संगीत केवल गायन तक ही सीमित कर दिया जाता है। वादन के क्षेत्र में उन्हें अवसर दिया भी जाता है तो हारमोनियम, सितार तक। लेकिन तबला कहानी में बबली तबला बजाने की इच्छा जाहिर करती है और पिताजी कहते हैं कि सुबह बबली को तबला बजाना सिखाएँगे, शाम को जीत को। हालाँकि शुरुआत में जीत इस बात से नाराज़गी दिखाता है लेकिन जीत बाद में इस बात को समझ जाता है कि जिसको जो पसंद हो, वही करना चाहिए। यह अवसरों की समानता के साथ-साथ उन तक पहुँचने का एक सटीक संदेश है।

बरखा की कहानियों के बाल-पात्र चाहे वे भाई-बहन हों या संगी-साथी मिलजुल कर सारे काम निपटाते हैं। बबली, मिली, तोसिया, नाजिया जहाँ नए खेल सुझाती हैं वहीं खेल की सामग्री भी बनाती हैं और खेल की अगुवाई भी करती हैं। इनके नन्हे दिल उमंग, उत्साह, जोश से भरे हैं। ये हर काम करना चाहती हैं, सब कुछ सीखना चाहती हैं। अपना अस्तित्व बनाए रखने का हौसला रखती हुई ये अपने हमउम्र नन्हे पाठक साथियों से मानो कहती हैं-कर लो दुनिया मुट्टी में। साथ ही कहानी के बालक पात्र प्रायः सामाजिक तौर पर वर्जित क्षेत्र 'रसोई घर में चाय, खाना व मेहमानों का स्वागत करते हुए उत्साहित नज़र आते हैं। इस प्रकार बरखा की कहानियों में लड़के-लड़कियाँ दोनों के ही स्वर समान रूप से मुखरित हुए हैं। दोनों को ही गरिमा के साथ प्रस्तुत किया गया है। बरखा की विभिन्न कहानियों में बच्चे चाय, खाना बनाने तथा मेहमानों का स्वागत करते हुए उत्साहित नज़र आते हैं। न केवल

लड़कियों अपितु लड़कों से भी जुड़े हुए जेंडर मिथक को सवाल करने का प्रभावशाली प्रयास है- बरखा पुस्तकमाला।

क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला - बरखा की कहानियाँ उदाहरण स्वरूप यहाँ दी गई हैं। पाठ्येतर सामग्री के चयन के दौरान भी आधार बनाया जा सकता है।

### स्वयं चिंतन

1. क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला - बरखा की कहानियाँ किस प्रकार बच्चों में लैंगिक समानता के प्रति संवेदनशील एवं स्वस्थ दृष्टिकोण के विकास में सहायक हैं? किन्हीं दो पुस्तकों का जेंडर आधारित विश्लेषण कीजिए।

### 3.7 पाठ्येतर सामग्री - चित्र, कविता, कहानी आदि

भाषा सीखने में कविताओं का आश्चर्यजनक योगदान रहता है। कविताएँ अपनी लय और तुकबंदी के कारण बच्चों को सहज ही अपनी ओर आकर्षित करती हैं। इसलिए भाषा की कक्षा में पाठ्यपुस्तक से इतर कविताओं को स्थान देना बच्चों को भाषा सीखने की ओर अग्रसर करना है। कविताओं के माध्यम से बच्चों में सौंदर्यानुभूति विकसित करने के साथ ही जेंडर के मुद्दे के प्रति भी सकारात्मक रवैया विकसित किया जा सकता है। उदाहरण के लिए एक कविता यहाँ दी जा रही है –

दादा चाहते मैं बनूँ प्रोफेसर  
माँ चाहती सीखूँ कंप्यूटर।  
पापा चाहते मैं बनूँ अफसर  
चाचा चाहते बनाना डॉक्टर।  
दीदी चाहती मैं बनूँ इंजीनियर  
भैया चाहते बनाना कलक्टर।  
लेकिन मैं खुद तय करूँगी  
क्या बनूँगी आगे चलकर?

आमतौर पर घर में निर्णय लेने का कार्य घर के पुरुष सदस्य करते हैं। यह कविता इस मिथक को तोड़ती है कि निर्णय लेना केवल पुरुषों का ही कार्य है। इसमें दादा, पापा, चाचा, और भैया के साथ माँ और दीदी की भी इच्छा दर्शायी गयी है। सबसे अच्छी बात तो यह है कि कविता की बालिका बातें

तो सबकी सुनती है पर तय करती है कि वह स्वयं यह निर्णय लेगी कि उसे क्या बनना है।

बच्चों के लिए विकसित किताबों में निहित चित्र किताब को तो आकर्षक बनाते ही हैं, इनके माध्यम से बच्चों को संदेश भी दिए जा सकते हैं। जैसे - किताब में यदि कोई ऐसा चित्र दिया गया है, जिसमें बच्चे रेल का खेल कर रहे हैं। जिसमें आगे एक लड़की इंजन बनकर खड़ी है। उसके पीछे भी एक लड़की खड़ी है। इसके बाद एक लड़का, फिर लड़की, इसी क्रम में बच्चे खड़े हैं। सबसे पीछे का डिब्बा बनकर भी एक लड़की खड़ी है, जिसके हाथ में हरी झंडी है।

इस चित्र को बच्चों को दिखाकर उनसे कितनी ही बातें की जा सकती हैं- लड़के-लड़की मिलकर खेल रहे हैं। लड़की सबसे आगे रेल का इंजन बनकर खड़ी है। वह सब बच्चों की अगुवाई कर रही है। सबसे पीछे के डिब्बे में खड़ी लड़की गार्ड बनी है। इसी प्रकार से कक्षा में घर का भी कोई ऐसा चित्र दिखाकर बच्चों से बातचीत की जा सकती है, जिसमें घर के सभी सदस्य मिल-जुलकर काम कर रहे हैं। चित्र बच्चों को संदेश देने का एक सशक्त माध्यम है। कक्षा में विज्ञापनों को भी स्थान दिया जा सकता है। कम शब्दों में अधिक बात रखने वाले विज्ञापनों के वाक्य/गीत बच्चों के मन आसानी से रच-बस जाते हैं। ऐसे विज्ञापनों का चयन करें जो नारी की सशक्त छवि प्रस्तुत करते हैं। इस प्रकार के विज्ञापनों पर कक्षा में बातचीत समूह में मिलकर बनने के लिए कहा जा सकता है।

### स्वयं चिंतन

1. चित्र किस प्रकार बच्चों में जेंडर के मुद्दे के प्रति सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण विकसित कर सकते हैं? उदाहरण के द्वारा समझाएँ।

---



---

2. नारी की सकारात्मक छवि प्रस्तुत करने वाली किसी कविता (पाठ्येतर) का चयन कर बताइए कि कक्षा में उस कविता पर बच्चों से किस प्रकार से चर्चा करेंगी।

---



---

### 3.8 शिक्षक की भूमिका

पाठ्येतर सामग्री का कक्षा में सफल उपयोग तभी किया जा सकता है जब शिक्षक कुछ आवश्यक बातों को दृष्टिगत रखे।

#### पाठ्येतर सामग्री की आवश्यकता से अवगत होना

शिक्षक द्वारा कक्षा में पाठ्येतर सामग्री का उपयोग उचित रीति से करने हेतु सर्वप्रथम आवश्यक है कि शिक्षक स्वयं पाठ्येतर सामग्री की आवश्यकता और उपयोगिता से परिचित हों। शिक्षक को पाठ्यपुस्तक से इतर पुस्तकों के विषय में जानकारी होनी भी निहायत जरूरी है।

#### चयन के बिंदु

पाठ्येतर सामग्री के चयन में सतर्कता रखनी आवश्यक है। पुस्तक के शीर्षक से उसके कलेवर का अनुमान लगाना उचित नहीं। कई बार ऐसा होता है कि पाठ्यसामग्री पुस्तक के शीर्षक से मेल नहीं करती। अतएव पुस्तकों को बच्चों के लिए उपलब्ध करवाने से पूर्व अवश्य पढ़ लें। चयनित किताब/रचना रोचक हो, बच्चे की आयु परिवेश के अनुकूल हो, भाषा सरल तथा सरस हो। पुस्तकों के चयनोपरांत उनकी उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करें। चयन करते समय इस बात का विशेष रूप से ध्यान रखें कि चयनित पुस्तक/रचना लैंगिक समानता की दिशा में सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण रखती हो। इस संबंध में 3.5 में दिए गए चयन के आधार बिंदुओं को दृष्टिगत रखना अत्यंत आवश्यक है। ऐसा नहीं है कि लैंगिक असमानता दर्शाती पुस्तकों का प्रयोग लैंगिक संवेदनशीलता जागरूक करने के लिए नहीं किया जा सकता यह भी एक अच्छा माध्यम हो सकती है बशर्ते शिक्षक कक्षा में उन पर चर्चा करें।

#### पाठ्येतर सामग्री का पूर्व पठन

किसी भी कविता या कहानी की पुस्तक के कक्षा में प्रयोग से पूर्व शिक्षिका द्वारा स्वयं उसे पढ़ना अत्यंत आवश्यक है ताकि बच्चों को सुनाने अथवा पढ़ने हेतु कहने से पूर्व उससे संबंधित जानकारी उन्हें दे सके। कविता या कहानी को पहले ही पढ़ने से बच्चों में उसके प्रति रुचि भी जाग्रत की जा सकती है।

### पाठ्येतर सामग्री की उपलब्धता तथा उपयोग

शिक्षक साथी हमेशा यह बात याद रखें कि मूल्य विकसित किए जा सकते हैं, थोपे नहीं जा सकते। इसलिए पाठ्येतर सामग्री के कक्षा में उपयोग से पूर्व कभी भी बच्चे से यह कहने की भूल ना करें कि इस कहानी/कविता से तुम्हें यह सीख मिलेगी। इसी प्रकार कहानी/कविता सुनाने के बाद बच्चों से यह प्रश्न भी नहीं करें कि कहानी/कविता से उन्हें क्या शिक्षा मिली? बेहतर यही है कि बच्चों से उस पढ़ी गयी या सुनी गयी रचना पर चर्चा करें और बातों ही बातों में उसमें निहित संदेश की ओर बच्चों का ध्यान आकर्षित करें। पाठ्येतर सामग्री का कक्षा में किस प्रकार उपयोग किया जा सकता है और उसमें शिक्षक की क्या भूमिका हो? इसे विस्तृत रूप से जानने के लिए क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला-*बरखा* से कुछ उदाहरण यहाँ दिए गए हैं।

*बरखा* की कहानियाँ बच्चों को स्वयं अनुमान लगाकर पढ़ने के अवसर और पढ़ने का आनंद देने के तथा बच्चों में जेंडर के मुद्दे के प्रति सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण के विकास में भी सहायक हैं। लेकिन बच्चे इस पुस्तकमाला का सही ढंग से उपयोग करें, यह काफी सीमा तक शिक्षक पर भी निर्भर करता है।

इस पुस्तकमाला को पढ़ना इसकी कक्षा में उपलब्धता पर निर्भर करता है। अतएव सर्वप्रथम दायित्व इस पुस्तकमाला की कक्षा में उपलब्धता करवाना है। अच्छा हो कि प्रत्येक कक्षा में (कक्षा 1 और 2) इस पुस्तकमाला के दो सेट हों। इस क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला को कक्षा में रीडिंग कॉर्नर में अथवा ऐसे स्थान पर रखें जहाँ से बच्चे उसे सरलता से उठा सकें। यह पुस्तकमाला बच्चों के लिए ही है, इसलिए बच्चों को देते समय किताबों के फटने या खराब होने की चिंता न करें। यह बच्चों के स्वयं अनुमान लगाकर पढ़ने के लिए है, इसलिए उन्हें इसे स्वयं पढ़ने के अवसर दें।

यह पुस्तकमाला चार स्तरों में विकसित है। यह प्रयास करें कि बच्चे कहानियों को स्तरवार पढ़ें अर्थात् पहले स्तर की दस कहानियाँ पढ़ने के बाद वे दूसरे स्तर की कहानियाँ शुरू करें और इस प्रकार क्रमवार चौथे स्तर तक जाएँ। यद्यपि इस पुस्तकमाला की कहानियाँ चार स्तरों में विकसित हैं लेकिन इस वर्गीकरण को एक कठोर नियम न मानें। यदि कोई बच्चा

तीसरे या चौथे स्तर की किताब पहले उठा लेता है तो उसे डाँटें नहीं। इसी प्रकार यदि कोई बच्चा एक ही कहानी को बार-बार पढ़ना चाहता है तो भी उसे टोकें नहीं अथवा तीसरे स्तर पर पहुँचने के बाद पुनः पहले स्तर की कहानी की किताब पढ़ना चाहता है तो भी उसे रोकें नहीं। ऐसा होना स्वाभाविक है। जो कहानी बहुत अच्छी लगती है, उसे बार-बार पढ़ने का मन करता है। इसके अतिरिक्त कुछ कहानियाँ पढ़ लेने के बाद बच्चे का आत्मविश्वास बढ़ जाता है और वह स्वतः ही उन कहानियों को दोबारा पढ़ना चाहता है। यह इस बात का सूचक है कि बच्चे में पढ़ने की ललक और आत्मविश्वास बढ़ रहा है। इसलिए इस पुस्तकमाला के कक्षा में उपयोग में लचीलापन बरतना आवश्यक है। इसके साथ ही बार-बार पढ़ने से बच्चों द्वारा कहानियों में निहित संदेशों का विश्लेषण भी संभव है। पढ़ी हुई कहानी को दोबारा पढ़ने से वे अपने निजी अनुभवों के साथ संबंध स्थापित करने का भी प्रयास करेंगे और बेहतर तरीके से निजी जीवन में सामंजस्य स्थापित कर पाएँगे।

### पाठ्येतर सामग्री पर चर्चा

शिक्षक साथी स्वयं पुस्तकमाला की कहानियों तथा इस पुस्तकमाला के सैट के साथ दी गई विवरणिका को पढ़ें ताकि बच्चों के साथ कहानियों, कहानी के पात्रों तथा चित्रों पर विस्तार से चर्चा कर सकें। *बरखा* की कहानियों में समाहित मूल्यों को समझें। इसकी कहानियों में मूल्य इस तरह से पिरोए गए हैं कि मानवीय संवेदना स्वयं ही उभर आती है।

कहानियों पर चर्चा के दौरान बातों ही बातों में इनके पात्रों पर भी चर्चा करें। जैसे बच्चों से उनके मनपसंद खेलों पर चर्चा से शुरुआत करते हुए पुस्तकमाला की कहानियों *झूला*, *आउट*, *गिल्ली-डंडा*, *छुपन-छुपाई* पर बातें करें। *झूला* कहानी में किस प्रकार बबली द्वारा *झूलने* का तरीका सुझाते हुए टायर को उछालकर पेड़ में लटकाकर झूला बनाना, कहानी *आउट* में अपनी सूझ-बूझ से काम लेकर बबली द्वारा कपड़े की गेंद बनाना, आदि बातों पर चर्चा करते हुए कक्षा में उपस्थित बच्चों से पूछना कि क्या कभी उन्होंने भी ऐसा ही कोई खेल सुझाया है? हाँ, तो कब और कौन-सा? इस प्रकार का संवाद बच्चों को स्वतंत्र अभिव्यक्ति का अवसर देगा। हो सकता है कि चर्चा के दौरान कक्षा की कोई छात्रा किसी खेल के दौरान

अपनी तत्पर बुद्धि का परिचय देने की बात सभी सहपाठियों के समक्ष उजागर करे और कोई छात्र अपनी यह बात छुपाना न चाहे कि किस प्रकार उसने खाना बनाने में सहायता की या वह रसोई में क्या-क्या काम कर सकता है।

इसी प्रकार से **मिली की साइकिल** कहानी पर कक्षा में हुई चर्चा अन्य बच्चों को भी समय के साथ आगे बढ़ने और समय की रफ्तार से चलने का संदेश देगी और कक्षा की प्रत्येक छात्रा अवश्य ही मिली जैसी बनना चाहेगी।

**चाय, फूली रोटी, भुट्टा, चावल, पत्तल** कहानियों पर बातचीत करते समय बच्चों से पूछें कि कौन-कौन घर के कामों में बड़ों की सहायता करता है। फिर इन कहानियों के मुख्य पात्र जमाल और मदन द्वारा मिल-जुलकर चाय बनाने, भुट्टा भूने, चावल पकाने और इन कार्यों के दौरान उन्हें मिलने वाले आनंद पर बात करें। इन कहानियों पर की गई बातचीत नन्हे हृदयों में बचपन से ही घर के कामों में सहयोग करने की भावना को विकसित करने में सहायक होगी।

उपरोक्त उदाहरणों से यह स्पष्ट है कि किस प्रकार **बरखा** की कहानियाँ बच्चों को लैंगिक समानता के मुद्दे के प्रति संवेदनशील बना सकती हैं।

इन उदाहरणों से आप अवगत हो गए होंगे कि किस प्रकार कहानी, उसकी घटनाओं तथा पात्रों पर चर्चा द्वारा बच्चों में जेंडर संवेदनशीलता जाग्रत की जा सकती है।

### स्वयं चिंतन

1. पाठ्येतर सामग्री के द्वारा बच्चों में जेंडर के मुद्दे के प्रति सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण विकसित करने में शिक्षक की क्या भूमिका है?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. वह क्या मानदंड (Parameters) होंगे, जिनके द्वारा आप किसी भी पाठ्य/पाठ्येतर सामग्री को जेंडर के परिप्रेक्ष्य में विश्लेषित कर सकेंगे?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3.9 संदर्भ

- क्रमिक पुस्तकमाला-**बरखा**, (पहली तथा दूसरी कक्षा के बच्चों के लिए), प्रथम संस्करण, (2008), राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्, नयी दिल्ली।
- **राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या की रूपरेखा** (2005), राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्, नयी दिल्ली।

# Creating Gender Friendly Classrooms

## Structure of the Module

- 4.1 Overview
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 Objectives
- 4.4 Classroom Organization and Management
- 4.5 Classroom Interactions
- 4.6 Transaction of the Curriculum in Specific Subject Areas
- 4.7 Peer Group Interactions
- 4.8 Allocation of Duties and Responsibilities
- 4.9 References

### 4.1 OVERVIEW

School reforms for quality improvement in education have gained paramount importance with various demands being made on schools to change, revitalize, restructure and reform their set up and institutional life. Concentrated national efforts are afoot on improving both the quality and efficiency of schooling with the specific intention of implementing reforms so that desirable changes are visible within the classroom setting and practices, particularly in rural and remote areas of the country.

New classroom reforms, programmes/strategies necessarily demand that teachers try out different instructional materials and methods and equipment to bring about

qualitative changes in the physical and social environment of the classroom. Given the scenario which exists in reality, teachers have very little say in policy decisions and programme intervention. However, in spite of these limitations, their perceptions and attitudes become crucial to building the classroom culture and ethos and redefining the teaching learning process. Several research studies over the years have clearly shown how the classroom environment can facilitate students' learning and remove gender biases and stereotypy. In fact a gender friendly environment can easily be created by a teacher in the classroom. It just requires sensitivity and positive intent. The creation of such a gender friendly environment will in turn help to

build equality and harmony between girls and boys in their early years and prepare them for equal partnership and shared roles in the future as well. It is the teacher who can actually create a gender friendly environment by giving heed to the following:

- To begin with teachers must define their roles as mentors and facilitators and not as instructors and knowledge experts aiming to disseminate information.
- As a facilitator, the teacher should ensure that physical and social environment of the classroom promotes a healthy relationship between boys and girls.
- She must also ensure equal participation of boys and girls in teaching learning process.
- She can adopt role play, problem solving, quiz and other participatory pedagogies in the teaching of languages, social science and science for ensuring greater participation of girls.
- Allocation of classroom duties should reflect gender neutrality. Boys and girls should participate equally in maintaining cleanliness, observing classroom decorum, decorating the class and conducting routine classroom chores.
- She must also entrust the responsibility of organizing classroom activities equally to both the sexes.
- Reading and recitation should be jointly assigned to boys and girls with correct pronunciation and voice modulation and expressions, in order to develop effective oral communications skills.
- The teacher should in addition be able to identifying slow learners and organize remedial classes for them.
- In the teaching learning process, special emphasis must be given to sharing of examples of women achievers who have contributed to different fields. This will help in attitudinal reconstruction.
- The use of visual aids like pictures, puppets, depicting women working in

fields along with men, in hospitals as doctors and nurses, showing household chores being shared by both the sexes can also help to create more gender inclusion and parity.

- In the transaction of subjects like mathematics, environmental studies, sciences and languages care should be taken to include examples of both boys and girls, men and women drawn from different walks of life so that the message of equal capability gets highlighted.
- The classroom culture should be built in a manner that dialogue between boys and girls and their interaction reflect mutual respect. The classroom ethos should be made open and supportive, so that both boys and girls feel free to share their personal experiences without apprehensions.
- The concept of equality of sexes may be explained by elaborating on the intelligence and capabilities of girls and women. The teacher must also ensure that there is equal participation of boys and girls in activities like drawing, painting, music and dance.

In the present module, an attempt has been made to identify those activities that the teacher as a mentor and facilitator can undertake for making the classroom environment gender friendly.

#### **4.2 INTRODUCTION**

Education of girls has always been considered an important instrument for bringing about social change. The teacher is expected to be an important intermediary who can bring about attitudinal change in students, especially girls who generally suffer from low self-esteem and have tended to receive less recognition and support. In fact, the teacher has to simultaneously “wear the hat” of an instructor, mediator, counsellor and surrogate parent and has to actively take initiatives to foster gender

equality through the daily classroom processes. Several studies have shown the existence of gender disparity at all levels of education. In 2015-16, participation of girls was 47.72 at elementary level, 47.57 at secondary level and 47.20 at higher secondary level (School Education India, U-DISE 2015-16, pg. 37).

The dropout of girls from education continues at all levels of education. In 2015-16, the dropout rate of girls was 4.13 at elementary level and 16.88 at secondary level (School Education India, U-DISE 2015-16, pg. 54).

Teachers can play a very crucial and significant role in promoting the access, enrollment, retention and achievement levels of girls. A gender sensitive teacher can initiate activities that would help boys and girls to grow up in a caring and sharing mode and not as adversaries. The National Policy of Education (1986) and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education Draft (2005) also stresses the important role that teachers can play in bridging the gender gaps that exist in education.

### Policy Prescriptions

**The National Policy on Education (NPE) (1986)** has emphasized, “The new policy will lay special emphasis on removal of disparities and attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far”. It has further stated that, “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, the training and orientation of teachers, decision makers, administrators and the active involvement of educational institution.

**The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF) (2005)** states that teachers should help in translating the, guiding philosophy embedded in the Education Policy of 1968 and 1986 and those mentioned in the National Curriculum Framework. As a positive interventionist and as a person who creates the classroom environment, a teacher can develop and plan practical interventions for making the ethos and process of curriculum transaction more gender sensitive. Further, gender sensitive teachers would help many girls to overcome age-old barriers of silence and isolation and help in the creation of a congenial environment where they are able to realize their potential and worth. Making education accessible to more and more girls, especially rural girls, minimising gender discrimination and gender bias in the school curriculum, textbooks and the process of transaction are absolutely necessary. Further, there is a need to develop and implement gender inclusive and gender sensitive curricular strategies to nurture a generation of girls and boys who are equally competent and are sensitive to one another.

### 4.3 OBJECTIVES

- To examine the role of teachers in creating gender friendly classrooms.
- To analyze the pedagogical processes adopted by teachers in transacting various disciplines related to sciences and social sciences at the primary and elementary stages.
- To observe classroom participation and peer interaction from a gender lens.
- To suggest activities that a teacher can undertake for making the classroom environment gender friendly.

### 4.4 CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Broadly speaking, the classroom consists of two sets of environments- the physical and the social. The physical environment

consists of classroom size, ventilation and light and the usual furniture and equipments which are necessary for meaningful teaching and learning to take place. The social environment relates to the behavioral aspect that determines the relationship between the teacher and the taught and among peers. It is the combination of the physical and social environment that determines classroom dynamics. In the context of gender, the physical organization of the classroom and its management are very crucial. Studies in classroom management have indicated that the physical conditions of classrooms are not always gender friendly. In the arrangement of furniture and in determining seating arrangements there is usually a bias. Boys and girls are often segregated and made to sit separately. The spacing between rows is not kept uniform. Generally girls tend to sit in the front rows and hardly move. Further, in overcrowded classes, it is often seen that faulty arrangement of furniture leads to jostling and pushing. This affects both boys and girls, more so girls, resulting in discipline problems. Also, bulletin boards in the class are located at a greater height, which normally becomes difficult for the girl child to reach. In such circumstances only boys get access to using the board for displaying items made by students. Studies also show that teachers do not show interest in the management of extra space in the classroom. Very often the space is left unutilized and in some cases where it is utilized, tables and chairs are arranged in such a manner that it promotes segregation among sexes.

It is usually seen that in schools established by the government, the ventilation and lighting may fall short of standards conducive to effective teaching and learning. Such conditions may affect the health and overall physical development of children. In the case of girls, the impact is more visible as their health status is generally poor, particularly when they

come from poor households or families where preferential treatment to boys over girls, exists. In order to make the physical environment of the classroom gender friendly the following activities/steps need to be taken by the teacher.

- She/he should encourage a mixed seating arrangement. It can if wished be based on the alphabetical list in the class attendance register.
- Ensure that adequate space exists while arranging furniture to permit free movement of students.
- Occasional circular and semi circular seating arrangements should be made to facilitate face to face interaction and collective sharing of experiences by boys and girls.
- Specific classroom spaces should be designated for different activities.
- The bulletin board should be placed at a height for better visibility but must be easily accessible to both boys and girls. All students should be encouraged to display their creative endeavours on it, be it in the form of poems, short stories, paintings, posters etc. Girls in particular must be asked to do so.
- By ensuring that the class has proper light and ventilation, the teacher can make it a comfortable space where students enjoy being.
- Visual displays in the classroom should be properly placed so that they are visible to all children and create an aesthetic and cheerful ambience.
- Care must be taken to see that the items displayed in the class are not gender biased and stereotyped in their content, illustration and presentation.
- Providing opportunities for girls and boys to work co-operatively and promoting sharing in mixed sex groups must become part of the classroom culture
- Gender should not be a barrier in the organisation of classroom activities.

#### 4.5 CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS

Studies on classroom practices have generally shown that teachers show biased attitudes towards boys and girls (Srivastava, Gouri, 1997 & Valerie. E. Lee, 1995). The above studies have highlighted this stereotyped attitude prevalent among teachers, especially while assigning tasks. Cleaning, dusting and beautification related activities are allocated to girls and all managerial and leadership related activities to boys. This can be overtly observed when boys are asked to lead the morning assembly or make groups for activities such as debates, quiz, and maintenance of school discipline. In co-educational schools generally teachers prefer boys as the monitors of class and encourage them to lead any kind of discussion. Also, as far as occupations are concerned the studies depict that teachers wanted boys to go into conventional professions such as Engineering, Aeronautics, Computer Sciences, all kinds of administrative jobs and in senior positions in the army etc., and girls to take up professions that are considered soft such as nursing and teaching as these professions would be concordant with their nurturant and caring nature. Thus, the general expectation from the teachers as well as the parents is that a boys needs a career whereas girls need husbands. This expectation stems from existing socialization practices and the traditional perceptions prevalent in the patriarchal belts of India- that a male is the bread earner of the family and lineage is traced through boys. Due to such inherent belief systems, parents and teachers, normally tend to be dismissive and discouraging towards girls and give more attention to boys, who are usually more demanding. Even when girls are encouraged to pursue a career, they are expected to opt for conventional professions like teaching and nursing where they can juggle between professional commitments

and household chores. In addition, the hidden curriculum practiced by teachers such as the body language, eye contact, methods of addressing boys and girls, etc. reinforce messages about girls' inferior status on a daily basis and provides them with negative learning experiences, thereby creating a culture of low self-esteem, confidence and low aspiration levels. Studies on classroom processes have shown that in the distribution of questions, discussions on various themes related to passages from social science and language books or while conducting poetry recitation activities, girls are generally paid less attention. Also, girls' contributions to classroom discussions are usually undervalued. There is a general feeling that boys fare better in schools than girls although most public exam results prove it false.

To encourage greater participation of girls in classroom processes, the following suggestive steps may be followed by the teacher:

- Distribute questions equally among boys and girls while transacting knowledge of various subjects such as languages, science and social sciences
- Discourage the dominance of a particular group of students or a specific student who always try to dominate classroom discussions
- Identify children (boys and girls) who are shy and do not participate in classroom activities and motivate them and provide them opportunities to participate.
- Girls as well as boys should be encouraged to speak, voice their opinion, answer questions and generally gain confidence by vocalising their thoughts in a constructive way.
- Boys and girls should be taught to listen to and respect each others' opinions
- The teacher should avoid projection of stereotypical language and attitudes through the usage of epithets such as "naughty boy", "cute girl", etc.

- Rewarding good performance can be made gender inclusive.
- Encourage healthy competition between boys and girls within and outside classroom spaces. This leads to smoother and healthier relations developing among them.
- All students should be expected to and encouraged towards showing caring behavior towards each other. The teacher can herself model an attitude of empathy.
- Avoid ridiculing boys or girls for lacking caring/sharing behavior.
- What is basically required is a gender neutral attitude and classroom dynamics which sensitively but succinctly create spaces for girls to be active participants in the classroom in academic transactions and tasks, in organisational tasks and in sharing their world view and experiences.

### **Hidden Curriculum**

Hidden curriculum is an important component of diverse schooling process operating across our country. It is an integral part of all activities that take place within and outside classrooms that are learned but not openly intended. Hidden curriculum is related to the transmission of norms, values, beliefs and behavior that either reinforce existing social and cultural ethos of the society or attempts to question and critique them. In the context of gender, it either perpetuate unequal power relation operating among gender, or help in evolving methods of questioning it and thereby becoming an important equalizing agency for addressing paradoxes between policies, on gender equality in education and practice. The important visible sites that reject hidden curriculum are pedagogical processes, and classroom management and all curricular activities that take place in schools.

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

- Use of language to address children
- Body language
- Touch/Physical Contact
- Eye Contact
- Adjectives used in Addressing boys and girls
- Gestures
- Movement while teaching and conducting different curricular activities.

### **4.6 TRANSACTION OF THE CURRICULUM IN SPECIFIC SUBJECT AREAS**

#### **(a) Language**

Language is a means of communication among different individuals. It is the medium through which different content areas are taught to students. It has the potential to encompass all human interactions, ideas, values and philosophies. It is the most powerful medium for translating ideas into practice. In the teaching of language the following steps should be taken by the teacher:

- Avoid use of sexist language that is derogatory, especially for girls.
- Constant use of he, himself, man, mankind should be avoided. Instead- they, themselves, people, human beings, etc. should be used depending upon the content and the context.
- Language should be used to develop a sense of mutual respect and dignity, co-operation and sharing.
- Situations may be created where girls and boys can express themselves freely and develop self confidence and mutual trust.
- Examples of women who have contributed in different fields may be cited.
- Those adjectives that reinforce and encourage the perpetuation of traits of masculinity and femininity should be avoided. Gender complementarity and androgyny should instead be promoted.

Area	2001 (%)		2011 (%)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Rural</b>	71.4	46.7	78.57	58.75
<b>Urban</b>	86.7	73.2	89.67	79.92
<b>Total</b>	75.26	53.67	82.14	65.46

Source: Census of India 2011, Office of Registrar General, India.

### (b) Mathematics

Mathematics has the possibility of leading students from concrete to abstract. It is therefore possible to show the equal contribution which men and women make in different walks of life such as sharing of labour and resources and developing positive and healthy attitudes. Some of the following suggestions can be incorporated in the teaching of mathematics to make it more gender fair:

- The teacher may bring out the importance of the small family norm from the point of view of family welfare. The profile of a large and small family respectively can be constructed and their utilization of resources in terms of food, clothing, education and shelter can be discussed.
- Dignity of work in all walks of life, including women's contribution to the household should be reflected through exercises projecting computation of time, labour and energy devoted to different tasks.
- The growing participatory role of women in all walks of life must be reinforced and highlighted.

Female illiteracy is a serious handicap in the development of a positive self image for most girls. Likewise, impediments to girls' development also arise from early marriage, dowry etc. Data can be shown in this regard and students asked to analyse it. For example, the tabular representation, as given here, can provide a visual effect of the problems and give an opportunity for mathematical analysis of the figures. Discussion which subsumes the gender factor can then be taken up.

- Find the total percentage of female literates in 2001
- Find the total percentage of male literates in 2001
- What was the percentage of rural literates in 2011, as compared to 2001? Is there an increase in the percentage of rural literates in 2011 in comparison to 2001, if yes then how much?
- What was the percentage of urban literates in 2011, as compared to 2001? Is there an increase in the percentage of urban literates in 2011 in comparison to 2001, if yes then how much?

### (c) Social Studies

The subject matter of social studies deals with the interaction of human beings with their physical and social environment. While teaching the subject, care can be taken to ensure the following:

- A conscious effort to substantiate social studies topics with women's contributions. In the chapter on freedom struggle for instance, the contributions of Sarojini Naidu, Madam Bhikaji Cama, Annie Besant, Ramabai Ranade and so on must be highlighted.
- To build a positive attitude towards women, films, pictures, slides of men and women performing similar jobs as agriculturists, pilots, doctors, engineers etc. may be shown. They would carry overt and covert messages about women's potential and capability.
- Fundamental rights and duties may be explained to students from the perspective of emphasising that equality

between sexes is the nucleus of our Constitution.

- Students may be asked to do some simple investigations to find out the role played by some significant institutions in promoting the interests of women like the National Commission of Women's Rights, SNDT University, etc.
- Students may be encouraged to find out the contributions made by women to fight social inequalities and promote equality such as Irawati Karve.
- Equality and equal abilities for performing various functions by men and women need to be emphasized.
- Thoughts and sayings of eminent persons, both men and women should be shared with students.

Students may be asked to identify women who have made significant contributions in fields like business, economy, art, literature etc, such as Sudha Murty, Ela Bhatt, Radha Phadkar, Anjali Ela Menon.

#### 4.7 PEER GROUP INTERACTIONS

Several research studies have shown that for analyzing the behaviour and attitude of students, observation of peer group interaction is very important. Normally, there is no guiding principle regarding peer group formation. Such groups are formed on the basis of mutual liking and interests. Sometimes peer groups are also formulated on the basis of socio-economic backgrounds. Studies have shown that at times sex is a determining factor in the formation of groups, especially among adolescents. Boys form one group and girls another in school related and leisure time activities. However, peer groups are not always well adjusted. Sometimes behavioural problems keep erupting in the form of intra-group rivalry, boys teasing

girls, jostling, pushing and fighting. Since our concern is with gender, getting peers to respect and accept each other and not use gender as a basis for self promotion or bullying is important. The teacher must try to posit attitudinal change which aims at creating mutual regard between the two genders. Some small but significant steps can be taken in this direction. Some of them are as follows:

- Through classroom dynamics, the formation of mixed peer groups may be encouraged.
- Use group formations to offset extremes of behaviour. For instance, obedient compliant children can be placed together with more dominating and aggressive children so that they mutually learn from each other.
- Encourage sharing and caring between peers in all school spaces and activities.
- Promote healthy competition between groups.
- Identify tasks for accomplishment through group activity.
- Form groups for specific tasks such as environmental activities which include keeping the classroom and environment clean and tidy.
- Form groups to explore the nature of events, for instance survey of social practices.
- Try and promote mutual respect and appreciation for all students from diverse backgrounds
- Encourage confidence building among students by giving space and opportunity to all, especially to those who are shy.

Needless to say all the above strategies are to make peer groups more gender inclusive and appreciative of the other gender.

### Self-Reflection

- I. You have arranged furniture in rows for boys and girls to sit together. After two weeks what kind of changes do you think you will find? (Tick the right response)
- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| (a) Boys and girls are friendly                             | Yes/No |
| (b) They help each other in:                                |        |
| (i) Class work  | Yes/No |
| (ii) Home work  | Yes/No |
| (iii) In understanding difficult portion of Chapters taught | Yes/No |
| (iv) Sharing stationery items                               | Yes/No |
| (v) Boys and girls do not interact with each other at all   | Yes/No |
- If, no, try and find out the reasons
- II. (a) After reading a passage from a textbook you have distributed questions to both boys and girls of your class. (Tick the right response)
- (b) If a girl hesitates to answer what will you do?
- (i) Patiently wait
- (ii) Motivate her to say few lines in her own words.
- (iii) Make her sit with children who participate more in the class.
- (iv) In parent teacher meeting discuss the problems with parents and try to find out why she hesitates in participating.
- (v) All the above.
- III. Organize an experiment in your class with the help of a mixed group of boys and girls. What kind of changes you observe in the attitudes of the boys and girls.
- (a) Boys and girls were enthusiastic in conducting experiments.
- (b) Only boys performed and girls observed.
- (c) Boys dominated during the conduct of the experiment.
- IV. What steps do you take to encourage active participation of girls in class? (Tick the right response)
- Motivate them.
  - Involve girls who are shy in co-curricular activities.
  - Make groups of children with mixed abilities so that they learn through peer interaction.
  - All the above.
- V. Observe the impact of a mixed group while conducting an experiment.

### 4.8 ALLOCATION OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is vital that the duties and responsibilities in a class are seen as the prerogative of both genders. The teacher as a mediator of the classroom environment should set the

classroom culture by ensuring that duties and responsibilities are distributed equally among both boys and girls. Biases and stereotypes should be avoided. All tasks should be allocated on the basis of non-sexist, non-traditional division of labour.

In fact, the tasks should be allocated only on the basis of capacities of individuals. In functional terms, the following may be observed by the teacher:

- Both sexes can share duties in the classroom. Boys should be expected to be as tidy as girls.
- Appoint both boys and girls as classroom monitors.
- Comments made by children that reflect discriminatory or an intolerant attitude towards the other gender, should be discouraged.
- Negative comments on the basis of their sex roles should not be made.
- No disciplinary measures should be used that encourage hostility and rivalry between boys and girls.
- The punishment of students must never consist of making boys and girls sit together, as by doing so the teacher may be sending incorrect signals. Equal praise and approval should be given to both boys and girls.
- While forming groups for various activities such as preparing projects, models, and in the organization of educational excursions in particular, a group leader should be randomly selected from both genders.
- Cleaning of the blackboard, notice board, dusting charts, bringing water to the class and all such miscellaneous duties should be assigned to both boys and girls.
- The responsibility for arranging children into rows and straight line formations during assembly should be given to both the sexes.
- The task of supervising personal cleanliness of clothes, nails, shoes etc should be assigned to both boys and girls.
- Collection of home assignments should also be assigned to both the sexes.
- Students may be asked to choose leaders on their own for quiz competitions, debates, recitation competitions etc.
- Organization of cleanliness and beautification days may be done in which boys as well as girls participate equally, sharing the work in a non gendered way. Thus, boys should also be encouraged to do rangoli and flower arrangements.
- Always involve a team consisting of boys and girls to receive the chief guest for a school function. Handing over the flowers and garlands and making 'welcome' and 'thank you' speeches should be the equal responsibility of both boys and girls.
- Mock panchayats and parliament sessions with girls and boys participating together may be organized.
- Class elections must be introduced with equal number of girl and boy candidates. Likewise, in a rural setting boys and girls should be encouraged to play the Sarpanch equally.
- 5-6 monitors consisting of both boys and girls can be appointed for different tasks such as:
  - (i) Classroom maintenance
  - (ii) Classroom discipline
  - (iii) Supervising personal cleanliness of clothes, nails, shoes, etc.
  - (iv) Collection of assigned homework by teachers.

### Self-Reflection

- I. You are organizing the Annual Day of your school. For receiving the chief guest whom would you prefer?  
(a) Boy            (b) Girl            (c) Both
- II. While organizing a mock Panchayat whom would you prefer the village Sarpanch to be?  
(a) Boy            (b) Girl            (c) Both
- III. During a cleanliness drive of the classroom who is usually given the responsibility to clean the floor, the windowpanes, the blackboard and furniture?  
(a) Boy            (b) Girl            (c) Both

### 4.9 REFERENCES

- Cuff, E.C., Cassidy, A, Hustler D (Ed.). (1986). *Action Research in Classroom and Schools*. London, Allen and Unwin
- Denscombe, Martyn. (1985). *Classroom Control: A Sociological Perspective*, London, Allen and Unwin.
- Govinda, R, (Ed.) (2002). *Indian Education Report: A Profile of Basic Education*,. Delhi, Oxford University Press.
- Husen, Torsten, and Boalt, Gunna. (1968). *Educational Research and Educational Change*, Sydney, John Wiley and Sons.
- Jerome, H., Freiberg and Driscoll, Amy, Scoll. (1992). *Universal Teaching Strategies*, London, Allyn and Bacon.
- Nayar, Usha (1995). *From Girl Child to Person: Resource Materials for Teachers and Head Teachers of Primary Schools in India*. UNESCO: New Delhi Office.
- Steere, F. Bob (1988). *Becoming an Effective Classroom Manager: A Resource Book for Teachers*, New York, State University of New York Press.
- Teacher Education in a Changing Society*, (1974). Commonwealth Conference on Teacher Education held in Nairobi, Kenya, 26 April – May 1973, Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Walker, Rob. (1975). *A Guide to Classroom Observation*, London, Methuen and Co. Ltd
- Wheldall, Kevin and Glym, Ted. (1989). *Effective Classroom Learning*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell

# Mental Health of Adolescent Girls: Concepts, Concerns and Strategies

## Structure of the Module

- 5.1 Overview
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 Objectives
- 5.4 Conceptualizing Mental Health
- 5.5 Humanistic Theories of Mental Health
- 5.6 Strengths and Abilities of Mentally Healthy Adolescents
- 5.7 Factors Influencing Mental Health
- 5.8 Coping Strategies
- 5.9 Latest Trends
- 5.10 References

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

The module focuses on the critical stage in the life of the girl child, that is, adolescence. Adolescence as a life stage is crucial as it is the bridge between childhood and adulthood, wherein identity formation takes place. Several theories that throw light on this stage of development have been discussed in the module. In addition, factors influencing mental health have also been highlighted. Strategies that are useful for adolescent girls have been described, as also a set of coping mechanisms when in difficulties. Some life skills for girls and a set of self-reflective exercises have also been included.

### 5.2 INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of considerable change at both the **physical and psychological** level. The experiences that an adolescent has determine how mature and well balanced an adult she/he would be. The developmental pathway towards adulthood from adolescence is highly dynamic and fraught with biological, psychological, social and environmental factors interacting and influencing each other. It has been found that positive development is fostered when adolescents have developed a **sense of industry and competence, a feeling of connectedness, a belief in their control over their fate**

**in life and a stable identity.** Those adolescents who have attained this state demonstrate behaviors that are pro-social, do well in school and become effective members of different groups in society.

A focus of concern in the present context is the Indian adolescent girl because a **transition from girlhood to womanhood is a perilous one**, in which many girls begin to **doubt their own knowledge and experiences; ignore and devalue their own feelings and move towards relationships based on cultural stereotypes rather than on honesty and truth.** This is the period when they often become convinced that they are **lacking in something and are somewhat unworthy because they do not measure up to the expected ideals.** This may primarily be attributed to the physical, emotional and cognitive changes that place within them the onset of puberty and also on account of other psycho-social factors in society.

### 5.3 OBJECTIVES

- To **understand** the concept of mental health
- To develop **awareness about** the humanistic theories of mental health
- To become **acquainted** with the concerns of adolescent girls
- To **identify** the factors influencing mental health'
- To **know** the strengths and abilities of a mentally healthy adolescent
- To **get acquainted with the** strategies that facilitate and foster mental health.

#### Activities

1. What is mental health?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What are the characteristics of a mentally healthy person?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 5.4 CONCEPTUALIZING MENTAL HEALTH

**“What is mental health?”** Before introducing the concept of mental health and explaining what it connotes, let us try to answer the following questions by engaging in a self reflective process.

Undoubtedly, a sense of well being, happiness, satisfaction within one's life, optimism and cheerfulness, etc. must have come to your mind. So, mental health is best understood as a **psychological state of well-being, characterized by continuing personal growth, a sense of purpose in life, self-acceptance, and positive relations with others.** Some psychologists regard it as the ability to maintain a **balance between positive and negative emotions** such as elation and sadness. Other psychologists emphasize the role of one's environment in influencing well-being. While some define mental health as the **absence of mental illness**, many psychologists consider this definition too narrow. Irrespective of the conceptualization, we support, it is clear that mental health is a positive state of being in which an individual is **rational, well adjusted and rooted in reality.**

In the present context, the phenomenon of mental health has been addressed from the point of view of fostering and maintaining a facilitative level of personal and social functioning. In short, the humanistic perspective which emphasizes positive growth and evolution of the self in human beings has been adopted.

### 5.5 HUMANISTIC THEORIES OF MENTAL HEALTH

In order to understand the humanistic perspective better, we need to first know the elements of mental health subsumed within it.

In the humanistic perspective, the concept of mental health is incomplete without mentioning the contributions of two significant theorists who have worked in this

area, Abraham H. Maslow and Carl Rogers. Their perspective needs to be highlighted as they have based their theories on worth and dignity being accorded to every individual. In the case of adolescent girls, this assumes even greater significance because research has time and again demonstrated that their sense of self, particularly their self image and esteem are constantly threatened and eroded by their life experiences and their inner subjective frame of reference is seldom allowed expression. Thus, a perspective which takes cognizance of these aspects, especially their needs, their development of self and their individual uniqueness is particularly relevant and more meaningful to their context.

#### (a) Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

According to Abraham Maslow, **human needs** are an important part of all individuals' lives. He is of the view that while values, beliefs, and customs tend to differ from country to country and group to group, yet all individuals have similar needs. He felt that human needs were arranged in a hierarchical order, consisting of two major groups: **Basic needs and Meta needs**.

#### Basic needs

Basic needs are physiological such as food, water and sleep; and psychological, such as affection, security and self esteem. These basic needs are also called **deficiency needs** because if they are not met to the satisfaction level that an individual is seeking, then the individual will continually strive to make up for the deficiency. Thus, motivation flows from the need which has not been met and requires satiation.

#### Meta needs

Meta needs or growth needs are called higher order needs. They include justice, goodness, beauty, order, unity, etc. Basic needs take priority over growth needs because people who lack food or water cannot attend to justice or beauty. It is important that satisfaction is achieved in the earlier steps of the hierarchy before the higher needs emerge or can be addressed.

To provide a more concrete understanding, the needs of an individual are listed below in table 1 in a hierarchical order. The lower level needs, represented at the bottom (1 to 4) must be met before the higher level needs are met. The top four needs (5 to 8) can be pursued in any order depending on a person's wants.

**Table 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Need	Characteristics
<b>8. Self-transcendence</b>	This involves a <b>higher state of consciousness</b> such as visionary intuition, altruism, and unity with the universe
<b>7. Self-actualization</b>	This is a stage of <b>fullest development of potential</b> and involves knowing exactly who you are, where you are going, and what you want to accomplish.
<b>6. Aesthetic</b>	During this stage the <b>individual is at peace</b> , and is more curious about <b>inner compositions</b> . It is characterized by the need for <b>order and beauty</b> .
<b>5. Cognitive</b>	In this stage the individual is <b>learning for the joy of learning</b> , for understanding and feels the need to contribute to knowledge.

<b>4. Esteem</b>	At this stage, the individual feels the need to satisfy her <b>needs for confidence, sense of worth and competence, self-esteem and respect for others</b> . It is characterized by feelings of moving up in world recognition, and having fewer doubts about oneself.
<b>3. Belongingness and Love</b>	At this stage, the individual wants to <b>belong to a group</b> , have close friends to confide in. In short, one wants to love and be loved.
<b>2. Safety</b>	The need is to feel <b>free from threatened danger</b> , for security, conformity, and tranquility
<b>1. Physiological</b>	These are the <b>basic biological needs</b> , that is, the need for food, water, shelter, sex.

A discussion aimed at contextualizing the theory in the life of the adolescent girl in India, may be taken up by asking the question in the box (given below). The discussion may be led to conclude that the needs of many girls still remain unfulfilled because of the patriarchal nature of Indian society. Further, girls are often subjected to different forms of discrimination and violence.

Do you feel that the basic needs of the adolescent girl in India are adequately met?

---



---

After this, through analysing the case study given below, an attempt can be made to see how Maslow's need hierarchy operates in the real context of an adolescent girl's life.

### Activity

**Read the case given below carefully and answer the questions.**

Jyotsna is a 16 year old girl. She comes from a poor family and has to work hard during the day. She has to look after her siblings and the house. Having seen the lady doctor who had come to their village a few months back, her dream too was to become a doctor. Knowing however, that she was poor and had other priorities and concerns, she accepted the fact that she would never be able to go to a medical

college. She then decided to work hard so that she could become a teacher and teach in the village school and do some good for her community. After the day's work, she would go to the adult education centre to study. She always tried to better herself, never did she blame her circumstances or her family and always had a good word to say about everyone. Her teacher would always say this girl is "spontaneous, creative, open to new experiences and likes to take on challenges."

1. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, what stage do you think Jyotsna is in? What are her needs?

---



---

2. What are her personality characteristics?

---



---

She would best be described as a **mentally healthy girl**; someone who fits into the category of a **person with higher order needs** because she **deals effectively** with her life situations, **accepts its reality** and **does not feel embittered or lose faith in her own abilities**. Rather, she **seeks** alternative ways of coping. She is **growth oriented** and provides positive experiences to her sense of self. There is every possibility of her becoming a self actualized person

eventually. According to Maslow, self-actualized people are characterized by the following qualities.

- They have **better perception** of reality and are comfortable with themselves and their life situations.
- **They accept** themselves and their own natures.
- They **lack** artificiality.
- They **focus on problems outside** themselves and are concerned with basic issues and eternal questions.
- They like privacy and **tend to be detached**.
- They rely on their **own development** and **focus on continued growth**.
- **They appreciate** the basic pleasures of life (do not take blessings for granted).
- They have a **deep feeling of kinship** with others.
- They are **deeply democratic** and **are not really aware of differences**.
- **They have strong ethical and moral standards**.
- **They are original and inventive, less constricted** and fresher than others.

This list shows us that striving towards self-actualization is possible for all adolescent girls, provided they are given support and a conducive environment. Every girl can be like Jyotsna – it is only a matter of having the right frame of thought and truly positive striving. Self actualization is thus not an abstract goal, but an achievable reality. The concept of actualization has been discussed extensively by Carl Rogers as well.

### (b) Carl Rogers' Theory

According to him all beings have a basic tendency to **actualize their inherent potentialities**. This potential exists in all living organisms, even plants. Humans possess an additional form – the attempt to actualize the self – called self-actualization. Before we talk about the qualities or characteristics of a self actualized person, let us briefly highlight Rogers' core characteristics of an individual's

personality. Let us try to understand the basic tenets of his theory.

**Self:** This is a **person's conscious sense of who and what she is**. It is available to **awareness**. It gradually emerges through experiences with verbal labels such as ``I`` or ``Me`` and the phenomenological reality (a person's private perception of reality). For example, I am a 16 year old girl, or everyone likes me because I am proactive, take initiative, understand others and help them as much as I can, or I am intelligent and want to be a journalist, and so on. The significant aspect is **personal experiences**.

**Need for Positive Regard:** This is the universal need that each person has for acceptance, love, and approval from others.

**Need for Positive Self-Regard:** This is **when acceptance and approval** come from **within the individual** and become a part of the self-concept. These include self-esteem, self-worth, and a positive self-image. This aspect is highlighted by feelings such as "I am intelligent", "I am worthy of being loved", "I am going to be successful in whatever I do" and so on. This is achieved by experiencing the positive regard others show them during their formative years that is, when they are growing up. Rogers' theory thus carries a series of implications for the adolescent girl in India, especially her need for positive regard, love and acceptance. Let us try to see what influences operate on developing her sense of self. For this, the following reflective exercise will be engaged in.

#### Reflect upon the statements given below

- "If you do..... you are a good girl."
- "I will like you only if you complete your work."
- "You can never do anything in your life. You made a fool of yourself and me in front of the Principal."

- “Only if you come first in the class, then you will be my best student.”
- “You are worthwhile, only if you are thoroughly competent, and a high achiever.”
- “To be like by me, you have to be always the best, better than the rest.”
- “In order to be liked by me, you should always do as I say and agree with all that is said.”

1. How often do you find yourself using such conditional statements?

---



---



---



---



---

2. Write the impact of such statements on the other person.

---



---



---



---



---

When you use such statements, you are putting **conditions of worth**. This means **granting love and approval only when the behaviour is in accordance with your expectations or society's demands**. For example, an adolescent girl will get love as long as she follows her teachers' or parents' wishes; if she does something contrary to their wishes, they withdraw their love. We must remember that individuals need positive regard and unconditional acceptance to truly grow. When we impose conditions before accepting them, conditional positive regard leads to conditions of worth wherein the individual's starts believing that she is worthy of affection only when expressing desirable behaviors. The individual likes herself only if she meets the standards others have applied to her, rather than actualizing her potential. We must remember that most often these **standards are created without keeping**

**the uniqueness of the individual in mind, without considering her potential and strengths**. Very often she may find herself unable to meet the standards, and therefore unable to maintain a positive self-esteem. This results in incongruence between her experience and the expectations from her.

**Incongruence:** It is the state wherein a **split occurs between what the individual experiences and what self-concept is**. There is a gap between the real self and the ideal self, between what “I am” and what “I should be”. This leads to **defensive behaviour** and **loss of self esteem**. Most practitioners of mental health workers locate the problems of adolescent girls in a poor sense of self. Through the dynamics of the Rogerian framework, it must have been understood why this happens. Most **Indian girls are victims of strictures and injunctions** which are strictly enforced, allowing them very **little naturalness, spontaneity or power and control over their lives**. In failing to live up to the expectations imposed on them, or being unable to give vent to their own wishes and desires, they often develop feelings of self doubt and self deprecation. There is much to learn from Rogers' theory for the Indian adolescent girl in particular. The importance of giving unconditional positive regard has emerged.

**Unconditional positive regard** is given when you **love and signal approval regardless of the individual's behaviour**. This does not mean lack of restraint and disappointment. For example, if an adolescent under the pressure of peers starts smoking or dressing indecently, she has to be stopped and told the harmful effects of smoking and dressing like that but she should not be condemned as a bad, immoral, evil girl. A constructive approach results in creating more **congruence**, which in turn leads to openness to experience and eventually to becoming a fully functioning person.

A mentally healthy person is a **fully-functioning person**, one in whom the self-actualizing tendency is vigorously functioning. The person reflects the following qualities:

**Openness to experience.** This is the opposite of defensiveness. It is the accurate perception of one's experiences in the world, including one's feelings. It also means being able to accept reality, including one's feelings.

**Existential living.** This represents **living here-and-now**. Rogers, insists that as a part of getting in touch with reality, we should not live in the past or the future. One is gone, and the other is yet to come. The **present is the only reality we have**. However, that doesn't mean that we should not remember and learn from our past. Neither does it mean that we should not plan or even day-dream about future. The important part is to recognize these things for what they are; memories and dreams, and what we are experiencing here in the present.

**Organismic trusting.** We should allow ourselves to be guided by the organismic valuing process. For this, we should trust ourselves, do what feels right, what comes naturally. Doing what comes naturally does not mean that if you are a sadist, you hurt people; if you are a masochist, you hurt yourself; if drugs or alcohol make you happy, you go for them; if you are depressed, you kill yourself. This means that you should **trust your real self, and you can only know what your real self has to say if you are open to experience and in contact with the actualizing tendency.**

**Experiential freedom.** Rogers says that the fully-functioning person acknowledges the **feeling of freedom and takes responsibility** for her choices.

**Creativity.** Fully-functioning persons, in touch with the process of self-actualization, will feel obliged by their nature to **contribute**

**to the actualization of others**, even life itself. This can be through **creativity in the arts or sciences**, through social concern and parental love, or simply by doing one's best at one's job.

On the other hand, a **maladjusted person** is one who has received conditional positive regard and developed conditions of worth. There exists incongruence between her sense of self and potentialities. The characteristics of such a person are:

1. **Defensive Living** – individual is not open to experience
2. Lives according to **preconceived plan**, which is generally laid down by parents.
3. **Disregards organism** individual is not intuitive
4. **Feels manipulated** – she is not free to choose
5. **Common and conforming**

#### Let us recapitulate what we have learnt so far

3. Identify a person you know whom you would call mentally healthy?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. List out the qualities of such a person?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 5.6 STRENGTHS AND ABILITIES OF MENTALLY HEALTHY ADOLESCENTS

### BOX 1

**Research has indicted that the adolescent who is mentally healthy, has the ability to:**

- Develop psychologically, emotionally and spiritually.
- Has **confidence** in him/herself
- Has a **comfortable sense of self**.
- Initiates and sustains **mutually satisfying** personal relationships.
- Uses and enjoys solitude.

- Becomes **aware of others and empathizes** with them.
- Plays and learns.
- Develops a **sense of right and wrong**.
- **Faces problems** and setbacks and **learns** from them.
- **Sets realistic goals and pursues** them with tenacity.

### Box 2

**Havighurst** (1972) explained the outcomes of adolescence through developmental tasks. These continue to have relevance in contemporary times and are listed below:

- Accepting one's physique and using the body effectively
- Achieving new and more mature relations with age mates of both sexes.
- Achieving a masculine or feminine social-sex role.
- Becoming emotionally independent of parents and other adults.
- Determining and preparing for a career and entering the job market.
- Developing the cognitive skills and concepts necessary for social competence.
- Understanding and achieving socially responsible behaviour.
- Preparing for marriage and family life.
- Acquiring values that are harmonious with an appropriate scientific world-picture.

## 5.7 FACTORS INFLUENCING MENTAL HEALTH

Different aspects of life can influence mental health. A number of researchers have identified critical areas that influence one's mental health. The areas which are of significance for an adolescent are personal qualities, school life, community, society family life, and the peer group

experiences. A schematic representation of the various factors that influence adolescent development and foster mental health has been presented in Figure 1. Negative experiences in these areas such as an unreasonable teacher or a turbulent family life can reduce one's overall sense of wellbeing.

As you can see in the figure, developmental process can be understood as the interactions of the individual with the environment. They facilitate an adolescent girl's constructing meaning of her life and existence in such a way that internal and external aspects of the environment are enmeshed.

Another important influence on mental health is **stress**. In general, people experience stress when demands placed on them exceed the resources available to meet those demands. Significant sources of stress in an adolescent's life include major life events such as puberty, death of a parent, entering college or beginning the next level of school, serious personal injury or illness. These events can overwhelm an adolescent's ability to cope and function effectively.

**Puberty** has a significant impact on the mental health of adolescent girls because it brings with it a number of developmental changes. Let us now briefly try to understand the developmental concerns of the adolescent girl.

**Participants may be encouraged to make a list of the concerns of the adolescent girls whom they know focusing on the challenges, problems and difficulties which they face.**

---



---



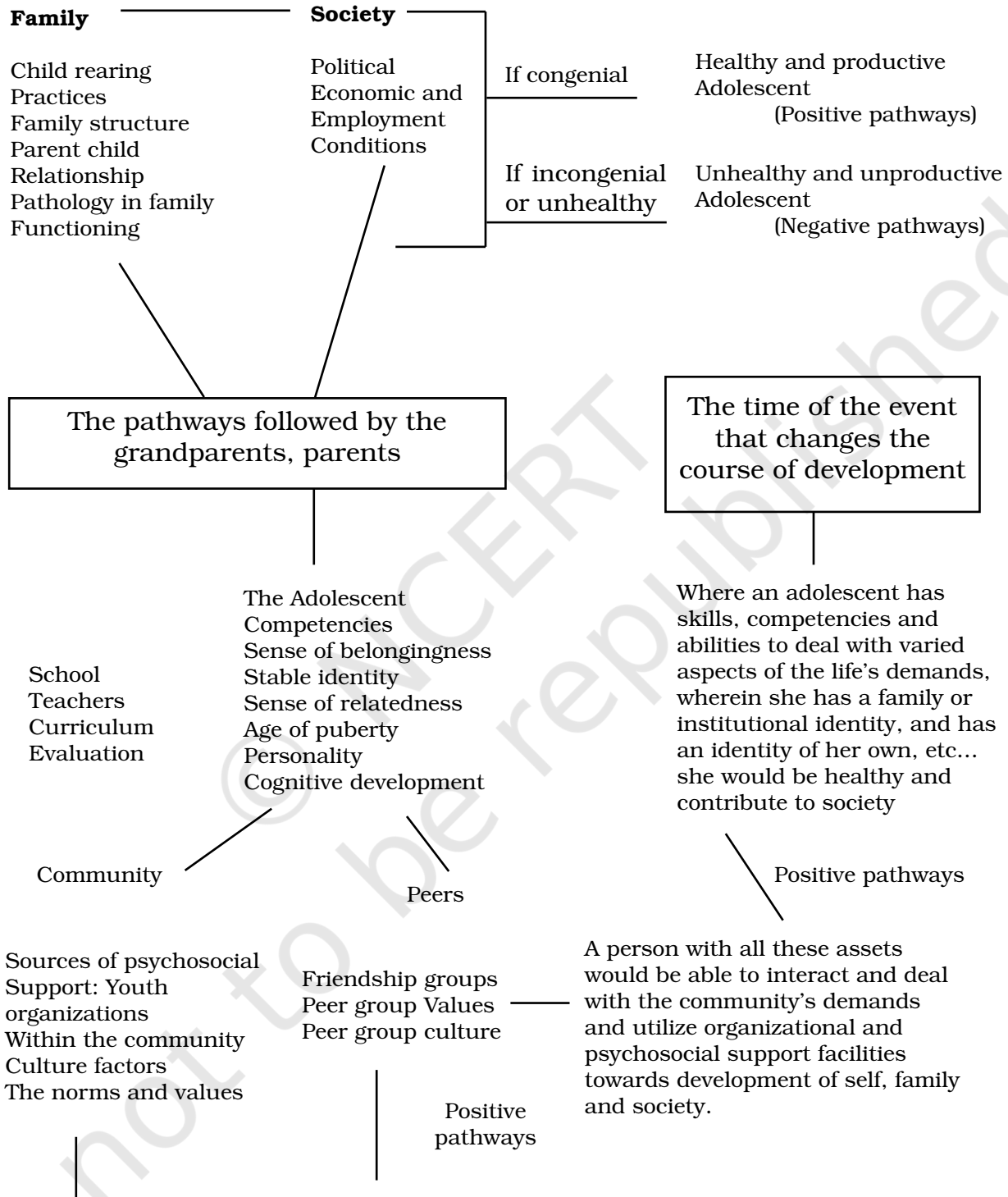
---



---

(See Appendix 1 for the concerns of the adolescent girls. A list has been attached)

**Figure 1 : Factors affecting Adolescent Development and Their Outcomes**



Source: Article **Adolescent Development: Promoting Positive Pathways of Growth** by **Dr. Vimla Veeraraghavan** published in Adolescent Care

**Then the following cases may be studied.****Case 1**

Shefali's father does not allow her to go for music class because she had secured only 56% in her XIIth board results. Her father does not allow her to talk to members of the opposite sex or go for movies either. There are restrictions in dress, and in the career she can choose. She is encouraged to talk softly and is always made to feel that she has to be dependent on others for everything.

**Case 2**

Faizal, an 18-year-old girl is conservative and extremely shy and keeps quiet in company. She lacks confidence in herself, feels that she is no good, is useless and has no friends. She is unable to understand why her parents treat her differently from her brothers. They always allow them to go out with friends, pursue college and do as they wish. She is just told that she will be getting married. So, she has to learn cooking and other household chores. All her aunts keep criticizing her saying that she is very short, not fair, has a lot of body hair and small breasts.

These are case examples of a few problems that many adolescent girls face.

During the teenage years, adolescent girls experience changes in their **physical development** at a rapid speed. This includes a sudden gain in height and weight, changes in hormonal levels which activate the development of secondary sex characteristics. As a result of these changes, teenage girls became overly sensitive about their weight and figure; their body image consciousness is usually very high. Since body image is a major concern, we will discuss it in greater detail in the next section.

Physical changes mediate a number of emotional changes as well. For instance, an adolescent girl who used to be hugged and kissed by her father now experiences

more restraint on her father's part because she has grown up. **Friendship patterns** too **change**. Suddenly, the neighbour's son with whom she played hide and seek, is viewed by her parents as a dangerous person (Ranganathan, 2003). Moral regulations on dress, life style and behaviour play an important role in her life and mothers usually become regulatory authority figures. Additionally, the growing girl is hastily socialized into the **feminine gender role and made to conform** with being "a good girl", which in turn is accorded a high premium value at home and in school. The perception of her future role as a home maker and child rearer begins to be continually reinforced and emphasized by all her associates in her environment. The naturalness, spontaneity and freedom which she experienced as a pre-pubertal child are now replaced by self constraints, social expectations and conformity pressure. As a consequence, many of her psychological needs such as risk taking, adventure, self expression, autonomy and freedom remain unsaturated and suppressed and 'self' begins to get defined as 'persona'. This often leads to high manifestations of stress, conflict pressure and anxiety. The experience of menstruation and the corresponding "hush-hush" attitude into which the girl is socialized also invariably develop in her a sense of guilt and shame. **The premium placed on "virginity"** and the impending danger of "male attack" becomes part of her being. She is continually reminded of these things, fostering within her a sense of weakness, inferiority and powerlessness.

At the same time, **cognitive development** continues to occur rapidly. The adolescent girl can now think critically and abstractly form hypotheses, judgments and evaluations. Unfortunately, all these forms of thinking receive stimulation and fulfillment only in academics, for they are not permitted expression in personal decisions and societal issues. In this

manner, the immense potential of the girl goes unutilized, or is suppressed. Hence, the gap between her innate potential and the reality of her existence further widens.

### **Specific Supportive Strategies for Adolescent Girls**

Parents, teachers, and administrators can provide support and encouragement to adolescent girls in several ways. **Parents** can:

- Begin early to **nurture freedom** from stereotyped expectations. Provide toys that reflect the full range of children's play and allow girls to watch TV programmes and movies that provide a balanced mix of stories with men and women characters in positive traditional and non-traditional roles.
- Encourage in **boys'** the development of **nurturing and caring attributes**.
- Take daughters into the workplace of their field of interest, and **explain how their work contributes to the good of the community**.
- **Inquire regularly about their daughters' participation** in school and consult with teachers about their **strengths**.
- **Listen** to their daughters' questions, complaints, and comments about peers, siblings, and adults, and make an effort to read between the lines to discover where real problems, if any, may lie.
- Be aware that girls receive **conflicting messages about their worth and place in our culture** from schools, television, and the movies. Counter these messages by **engaging in critical discussions** of these ideas and by reading and viewing age appropriate stories and biographies with strong female characters.

Given below are ways by which **teachers** can **foster** the mental health of adolescent girls. They should

- Find ways to **develop gender-fair curricula** for middle schools. Consider separate in-service time for male and

female teachers to consider questions such as:

- How can I look from a girl's perspective at what and how I teach?
- What do I show girls through my actions in the classroom?
- **Encourage girls to enroll and participate in all academic courses**, especially science and math, and see that their contributions are valued in classroom discourse.
- Deal **directly and age-appropriately** with issues of power, gender, race and politics, thereby taking adequate care to include critical perspectives on these issues in school curriculum.

### **Administrators can:**

- Develop, support, and enforce policies against **gender-related harassment** towards girls by students and teachers.
- Take lead in ensuring that teachers and school programmes offer **equal opportunities** to boys and girls in classroom and extra-curricular activities.
- As part of school improvement efforts, acknowledge the need to include a focus on **the improvement of self-concept and achievement of girls**.

## **5.8 COPING STRATEGIES**

The ability to **cope with adversity** can be crucial for the mental health of any individual. Coping means **successfully dealing with problems** that arise in life. People differ substantially in the way they cope with adversity. Some people engage in **emotion-focused coping**, a strategy that focuses on managing one's emotions. Examples of this coping strategy include distracting one's attention from the problem, denying the existence of the problem, venting one's emotions, or sharing emotions with others. A second form of coping, **problem-focused coping**, involves efforts to reduce stress solving the problem. People who use this strategy take active

steps to overcome the problem such as seeing a counsellor to repair a relationship or looking for a new job in response to problems at work. They may also seek advice from friends and family members.

People **can learn new coping skills:** Teachers or counsellors can teach adolescents how to handle difficulties in school, teach skills to cope with stressful life events and conflicts.

### Positive thinking

Positive thinking is the ability to believe in positive consequences and change. It can help to develop a **rational growth oriented attitude** among adolescent girls which in turn may help them in the realization of their dreams. Positive thinking results in **improvement in performance, energy increases and things seem to go better**. It banishes pessimism, boredom, frustration and despair of modern living and helps to build confidence and change negative behaviour patterns into positive ones. Negative thinking occurs when the adolescent puts herself down, criticizes herself for errors, doubts her abilities or expects failure, etc.

### Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is an attitude, which allows individuals to have positive yet realistic views about themselves and their situations. Self-confident people trust their own abilities, have a general sense of control in their lives, and believe that within reason they will be able to do what they wish, plan and expect. They have expectations that are realistic. Even when some of their expectations are not met; they continue to be positive and accept themselves. They are willing to risk the disapproval of others because they trust their own abilities. They tend to accept themselves and do not feel that the need to conform to gain acceptance. On the other hand, people who are not self-confident depend excessively on the approval of others in order to feel good

about themselves. They tend to avoid taking risks because they fear failure. In general, they do not expect success. They often put themselves down and tend to discount or ignore the compliments paid to them.

### Ego Strength

Ego-strength is the individual's capacity to hold on to her own identity despite pain, distress turmoil and conflict between opposing internal forces and demands of reality. It is the **self's capacity to differentiate regulate, tolerate, to test reality and to think**. The individual needs to have sufficient ego- strength to be able to **deal with the world objectively**, to use conscious strategies to quickly resolve inner psychic conflicts, gain insights into the unconscious and deal with anxiety effectively. In the case of the adolescent girl, it is expected that if her ego strength is built up, she will have:

- Enough positive self-esteem to feel that she is **worth protecting**
- Capacity to **anticipate** situations of **risk**
- Ability to **control impulses**
- Pleasure in **mastering situations** of risk
- **Sufficient knowledge** about the outside world and to survive in it
- Ability to **be self-assertive** to protect self
- Ability to **choose others who will protect** her and not jeopardize her existence.

### Practical Strategies for Adolescent Girls

The question which arises is how to foster all of these. Some strategies that the adolescent girl can practice have been listed below.

#### (a) Count Your Blessings

**Read the following statements carefully and hypothesis to find the objective of the exercise.**

I have caring parents/spouse who love me and will do anything for me.

I have many friends

My teacher was very happy with my work.  
I can share my feelings with my sister/  
brother.

I can paint well.

I have two hands to work.

I have two feet with which I can walk  
properly.

**The list is endless.**

**What do you think the writer is trying  
to say?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This method is although very simple is a very powerful technique. All you have to do is take a piece of paper or a journal and simply **list all your blessings** (your family, your music, your friends, etc.) and successes on it. Date it, and put it away in a safe place. Later, when you are feeling unhappy; when things do not go the way you want them, pull it out and read through it, find comfort in your own words. You will realize the significance of **what you have accomplished and what you possess. It will make you smile.**

### **(b) Change**

Make a conscious effort to **change** statements such as “I can’t” into “**I can**” or “I failed” into “I learned from that experience”

### **(c) Emphasize Strengths**

Give yourself credit for everything you try. **Focus** on what **you can do** rather than on what you cannot; applaud yourself for efforts rather than emphasizing upon the end products. **Praise yourself and others.** Dream of success.

### **(d) Take Risks**

Approach each new experience as opportunities to learn rather than as occasions to win or lose. This will open new possibilities and can increase your sense of self-acceptance. Not doing so turns every

possibility into an opportunity for failure and inhibits personal growth.

### **(e) Refuting Irrational Beliefs**

Study the following statements and figure out what the writer is suggesting

1. Everyone should love me
2. I feel I am no good
3. It is easier to avoid than face a problem situation
4. If things go wrong once they will always go wrong
5. I have to be the best in everything I do.

These are a few irrational beliefs that form a part of an individual’s set of beliefs. Irrational beliefs like the ones given above are the principal origin of emotional disturbance. The individual should be taught to change them. Teachers can teach students how to replace these beliefs with rational, empirically founded beliefs. The techniques which will help include **Debating** as asking such questions as ‘what evidence is there to support the belief’ or “What makes this belief so or not so” – in which way does it have truth or falseness. **Discriminating** helps a person to clearly distinguish between wants and needs, desires and demands, rational and irrational ideas, absolute and non-absolute values and behaviour. **Defining** consists of helping individuals to choose their terms more precisely. They can do this by reflecting the following logical principle (1) just because it has happened once, it does not mean that it will always occur (2) just because one feels a certain way at a given point in time, it does not follow that one will feel that way forever, (3) just because one has behaved in a certain manner over a period of time, it does not mean that one cannot change.

This change in the belief system results in new, more appropriate emotional responses to situations, and develops skills that allow the individuals to first identify and then dispute their own irrational beliefs — a process they can then apply to other problem areas in their life.

### (f) Self-Evaluation

Evaluate yourself independently to **set your own targets** and goals. Do not compare yourself with others. Only you have the ability to **improve yourself**, you can do nothing about the other person. If you compare yourself with others one minute you will feel happy because you are better than the other person and the next minute you will feel miserable because someone else is better than you. This will result in constant sense of turmoil. **Focus internally** on how you feel about your own behaviour, work, etc. this will give you a stronger sense of self and will prevent you from giving your personal power away to others.

### (g) Sports and Exercise

Research has indicated that physical exercise on a regular basis results in better mood, **high self-esteem and feelings, increased stamina, staying power** both at the physical and psychological levels, there is more oxygen and better nutrition allocation and usage, strengthening of heart as it is able to pump blood better. For maximum effect, you must exercise on a regular basis. Getting up once a month to go for a walk probably won't be very beneficial.

### (h) Assertiveness

Assertive behavior is defined as the **proper expression** of any emotion other than anxiety towards another person. It is the ability to take a stance based on conviction without putting the other person down. It is an expression and accurate communication of affectionate behavior. It encompasses both positive and negative feelings. Assertiveness is often confused with aggression, which is intimidating, seeking to dominate the other person by use of force, which could be either overt or covert.

Do I believe that it is okay to agree to disagree, that consensus isn't always necessary?

The **key** to being assertive in behaviour and approach to life is to:

- **Understand yourself** – your values, beliefs, the whys and wherefores of your personality
- **Know yourself** – your wants, predispositions, ambitions and desires
- **Value yourself** – build your self-confidence and know and protect your rights
- **Understand and value others** – their values, beliefs and rights.

### (i) Set Goals

Setting goals and targets allows the adolescent girl to choose where she wants to go in life, to know precisely what she wants to achieve. This way she will know the areas where she has to concentrate and improve. Goal setting will give her long-term vision and short-term motivation.

## 5.9 LATEST TRENDS

When we are focusing on the preventive and promotional role of mental health, we need to address some key issues like life skills education, sexuality education, family life education and adolescence education.

### (a) Life Skills Education

“Life Skills Education” refers to the teaching of **life skills**. Life skills have been defined as “**abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour, which enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life**” (WHO 1993). They are essentially those abilities, which help to **promote mental well being and competence** in young people as they **face the realities of life**. Life Skills Education enables individuals to learn and practice skills. It subsumes the philosophy that young people should be **empowered to take more responsibility for their action**. The important areas of life skills education that should be taught for the promotion of health and well being of children and adolescents according to the WHO document are:

- Creative thinking
- Critical thinking
- Communication
- Self-Awareness
- Coping with Emotions
- Interpersonal Skills
- Empathy
- Coping with Stress

### (b) Sexuality Education

Adolescence is the time when the sexual drive is awakened. However, an adolescent girl **does not understand** that sex has physiological, psychological, emotional, moral, social and legal consequences. The **sex drive** in her **manifests** usually in the form of attraction to the opposite sex having 'crushes', hero-worship, dating, going steady and so on. She is likely to be impulsive and does not hesitate to take risks. She may indulge in sexual intercourse without realizing the consequences. So teachers and parents must guide and help adolescent girls to build their **sexual values** by giving them sexuality education. The focus should be on imparting education in **human sexuality, human reproduction, responsible and healthy sexual behaviour, related ethical and moral issues, sexual and reproductive health, safe sex, appreciating one's body, communication skill, refusal skills, and taking responsibility for one's action.**

### (c) Adolescence Education

Adolescents confront a number of problems because of the lack of authentic knowledge regarding their process of growing up, particularly, the issues related to reproductive health. Adolescence education aims to provide learners with **accurate and adequate knowledge** about adolescent reproductive health with a focus on the process of growing up during adolescence, the biological, psychological, socio-cultural and moral dimensions. The aim is to facilitate **rational attitude** towards sex, make them aware about HIV/AIDS and drug abuse, so that they develop respect

for the opposite sex and exhibit responsible behaviour towards sex and drugs.

### (d) Family Life Education

Family Life Education is education designed to **promote happy family life**. It seeks to prepare young people for a successful married life and responsible parenthood. The focus should be on the family, family structure, types and functions of family, family discords and their resolution, adolescence and related needs and problems, information about human sexuality, preparation for marriage, and responsible parenthood.

### Self Reflective Exercises

The cases given below are to be studied carefully and then discussed with reference to the questions that follow.

#### Case I

Vandana is a fair, beautiful 16 year old girl. She is good in her studies and is very popular among both boys and the girls. Of late, she has been inspired by the models on TV and wants to acquire a figure like them. She just watches FTV and reads fashion magazines. Even though she has a proportionate figure, she has started feeling that she is obese and has stopped eating foods with carbohydrates and fats. She spends most of her time in the gym and has no time for her friends. Consequently, she has distanced herself from them. She wants everyone to praise her and shower her with attention. If people don't complement her, she gets angry and frustrated. She feels there must be something wrong with her skin or figure. Of late one of her friends at the gym told her that cigarette smoking helps attract attention from the opposite sex and helps people lose weight.

You have to

- Identify the possible causes
- Mention what should be the desired behaviour
- List the steps you will take to foster mental health.

### Case II

Richa is 17 years old, both her parents are working. Her mother runs a boutique and father is an industrialist. She loves to see movies, listen to pop songs, watch soap operas and the latest music videos. She has recently had a fight with her boyfriend and since then doesn't like to talk to others, participate in school activities, forgets to do whatever she is assigned to do. She spends most of her time reading romantic novels and fantasizing how someday someone will woo her and whisk her away to a world of love and romance. The maths teacher found her inattentive in class and asked her to solve a simple math problem to which she replied that she had no idea what was going on in class. He also found a book in her lap. Same story seems to get repeated for most subjects. She has started day-dreaming excessively. Imagine you are her teacher and you want to help her.

You have to

- Identify the possible causes
- Mention what should be the desired behaviour
- List the steps you will take to foster mental health.

### 5.10 REFERENCES

- Brownlee, B. (1999). *Inside the Teen Brain*. US News & World Report.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
- Gilligan, C., Ward, J.V., Taylor, J.M., With Bardige, B. (1988). *Mapping the Moral Domain*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
- Hall, G. Stanley. (1904). *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*. New York, D. Appleton And Co.
- Lazarus, R.S. And Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal and Coping*. New York, Springer
- Lazarus, R.S. (1975). Coping with Stress: Measures and Future Directions for Scale Development. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), 377-85.
- Orenstein, P. (1994). *Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-Esteem, and the Confidence Gap*. New York: Doubleday.
- Ranganathan, N. (2003). Puberty sexuality and coping: An analysis of the experiences of urban adolescent girls. *Psychological Studies* 48(1), 56-63.
- Rogers, C.R. and Farson, R.E. (1976). *Active Listening*. University of Chicago, Chicago Industrial Relations.
- Sharma V. And Sharma A. (1994). *Menarche – A Traumatic Experience for Indian Girls*, Paper presented at the International Conference on Pre-Adolescence Clinic and Research.
- Sunderajan, P. (2001). *Development of a Need Based Mental Health Programme For Adolescent Girls*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. C.I.E., Delhi University.
- Thapan, M. (1997). 'Femininity and Its Discontentment: Woman's Body in Intimate Relationship' in *Embodiment: Essays on Gender and Identity*. Delhi, Oxford University Press
- Veeraraghavan V. (2000), Adolescent Development: Promoting Positive Pathways of Growth. In *Adolescent Care*, edited by Dr.S. Yadav, T.S. Jain. Delhi, IAP, Cambridge Press
- WHO. *Life Skills Education: Planning for Research* (1996). Division of Mental Health. WHO: Geneva.

# Teacher as a Counsellor

## Structure of the Module

- 6.1 Overview
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 Objectives
- 6.4 Teacher as a Counsellor : Rationale, Need and Significance
- 6.5 What is Guidance and Counselling?
- 6.6 Qualities Required for a Teacher to be an Effective Counsellor
- 6.7 Tools and Techniques for Teachers as Counsellors
- 6.8 References

### 6.1 OVERVIEW

Teachers today shoulder a wide range of responsibilities. Their roles and responsibilities are getting steadily redefined, given the rapid changes that are taking place in society. Thus, it is important for the present day teacher to understand that she cannot define her role only as an academic figure who holds the key to knowledge and worldwide information. She needs to have a more expansive conceptualization of her role to include being a facilitator, counsellor, mental health worker and one who has to nurture the overall development of her students, particularly helping them to develop a sense of self and identity through their schooling experiences.

The present module is designed to discuss the need and significance of a teacher's role as a counsellor. The concepts of guidance and counselling are discussed briefly in order to familiarize the teacher with the nuances involved in the processes. The module makes an effort to sensitize the teacher towards the needs of her learners and to her role of scaffolding and guiding them. The focus of the module, however, is chiefly on the girl child.

In this context, while it is acknowledged that all children face problems, challenges and difficulties in the course of their lives and require guidance and counselling help from time to time, for the girl child the need is much greater. She is typically

bound by many more societal and gendered expectations which she has to deal with and negotiate before she can embark on pursuing her wishes and dreams. She is taught through the socialization process since the time of her birth, to develop a relational sense of identity as a daughter and sister and subsequently as a wife, daughter in law and mother. Thus, her need for guidance, nurture and facilitation is much more pressing than it is for most boys.

## 6.2 INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world, girls face a number of stressors and problems coupled with many major challenges and bewildering opportunities in their lives. These cut across region, class, caste and religion. The range of problems and challenges is very vast and varied and the nature and form that they take emerge from the specific context in which the girl lives and grows. In traditional communities for instance, where the gender beliefs are more stereotypical, the challenges are bound to be different from what they would be for a girl living in a more urban context, where there is more gender equity. However, irrespective of the context, there are some issues common to all girls and women. These include body image and appearance concerns, sexuality, internalization of traits and characteristics deemed appropriate for females, coping with the responsibilities of matrimony, family life, motherhood and reproductive health and striking a balance between career aspirations and domesticity. It is not unusual to still hear of instances where girls are being denied the right to make their own decisions on issues of schooling, career and matrimony. There are also many stories from girls' lives where on account of early marriage, their education comes to an abrupt end. Likewise, because of the denial of reproductive freedom, they become young mothers and get relegated to domesticity out of compulsion. Thus, world

of girls and women is usually fraught with conflicts, dilemmas and struggles.

All teachers need to understand that the aim of education through the process of schooling is not only to help girl children to grow cognitively and augment their performance skills, but also to prepare them to deal with the challenges which they face in their lives, effectively and have a distinct sense of self and identity of their own.

## 6.3 OBJECTIVES

- To help teachers to define their role as counsellors.
- To make them sensitive to the needs, problems and challenges that their students face, particularly girls.
- To develop in them an understanding of different guidance and counselling tools and techniques.
- To make them aware of their responsibilities as counsellors.
- To help them internalize the requisite attitudes and characteristics to be effective counsellors.
- To help them to evolve gender-friendly methodology for application in classroom processes.
- To sensitize them to the enabling role that they can play in developing a sense of self and identity in girls.

## 6.4 TEACHER AS A COUNSELLOR: RATIONALE, NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE

Let us try to understand the need and rationale behind expanding the teacher's role to include that of a counsellor. The exercise in the box below may be taken up as a starting point.

### Self-Reflection

Fill in the following "I - statements" with what you think you can or cannot do to help your students not restricted only to your subject area, but going beyond it, as their teacher. Write a minimum of 10 statements.

- I cannot \_\_\_\_\_
- I cannot \_\_\_\_\_
- I cannot \_\_\_\_\_
- I cannot \_\_\_\_\_
- I cannot \_\_\_\_\_
- I can \_\_\_\_\_
- I can \_\_\_\_\_
- I can \_\_\_\_\_
- I can \_\_\_\_\_
- I can \_\_\_\_\_

A discussion can then be taken up on participants' experiences of filling up the box. The possibility is that most of them would have thought that the list was very vast and never ending. If they had more number of "I cannot" and very few "I can" statements, then it is important to make them realize their potential as teachers to make a difference to their students' lives, especially girl students, who can identify better with their female teachers because of gender commonality.

As part of the preparation process in making teachers counsellors, the first task is to help them identify what are the various areas where the present day girl student faces major stressors and challenges in her life.

The section below which presents a few case vignettes from the urban context may be used for this. The case vignettes can be expanded by the group to include examples from rural and semi urban contexts as well. Basically, the participants are asked to analyze each one of the vignettes and think about what specifically they can do to help the student in each of the conflict ridden or problem situations. The two important things that need to be kept in mind while analyzing the cases are:

- Maintaining a positive attitude of "I can do it", and
- Not playing the role of an authoritative administrator, but that of a caring and concerned teacher.

**Case 1:** "Reena studies in a private urban co-educational school. She is in Class 9. She is reputed to be an intelligent girl, who scored well in her exam, all through her middle school years. Of late, she has become very quiet. She is rarely seen interacting socially with anyone in her class. Her grades are also falling. She has become very conscious about her looks, i.e. she generally wears loose shirts, etc. She is also confused about the interest which a boy in her class takes in her. On her part, she likes talking to him, but feels guilty about it. Even though she talks only for a few minutes with this boy and that too only during school hours, she keeps feeling guilty about it. Somewhere she enjoys his company but is scared to admit this. She cannot discuss her feelings or problems with anyone, for she belongs to a very conservative family. She is afraid that they would stop her from going to school or will severely punish her."

**Case 2:** "Hema is these days very confused about what subjects she should opt for in Class XI. She is not very clear about the various fields/streams which exist. She is a good student and has the capability to deal with all the streams. This makes it all the more confusing for her. On television she has encountered successful women in unusual careers like pilots, aeronautical engineers, police women, television stars, etc. She is very drawn towards these but wonders whether she will be able to deal with them being a girl and also whether her family will permit her to take up something unconventional"

**Case 3:** "Seema is in an all girls' school. She is generally caught bullying her classmates and her juniors. But one of her friends, who is also her neighbour says that this is probably because her parents don't let her go out of the house without them. They are very conscious that being a girl, she has to be safe and well protected. She sees that these rules do not apply to her brother. At home, she remains subdued since whenever she tries to rebel or ask questions, she is scolded by her parents. Probably that is

*why in an all girls' setup she exercises her power which comes out as bullying younger, more vulnerable girls."*

Such cases are not uncommon instances. Participants can be encouraged to add to the list. In fact, cases should be constructed by them on the struggles and conflicts that girls face in different settings and contexts. The following activity may be done by teachers to arrive at a list of challenges which the present day girl child faces.

### **Let us do it in class**

A few chits of paper may be made. On each chit, a different aspect such as personal, interpersonal, self, career, societal, etc. may be written. The chits may be given to a group of 3-4 participants asking them to brainstorm and come out with the maximum number of problems they think girls might face in each of the areas. They may be asked to keep in mind both the rural and urban contexts. Basically they should be encouraged to generate a list.

From the lists generated by them, the concerns of the girl child can then be discussed. The focal points of discussion should aim to build up understanding of her needs and difficulties. This will help teachers to appreciate their role in guiding her. Some examples may be cited for further clarification. For instance, one of the primary needs of girls is to prove themselves as capable outside of the domestic sphere. For this they need facilitation. At times, girls have to fight stereotyped gender roles and expectations to achieve something or pursue their interests and dreams. For this too they need guidance and protection. Additionally, there are many instances of girls developing low self-esteem for not having had adequate support from their family right from the day of their birth, especially in comparison to their brothers. They harbour these as grievances of inequality and have to be

guided and counselled in dealing with their frustration and anger. Many girls from the lower class or from rural backgrounds have to struggle hard to strike a balance between household chores and school work. They need the support of teachers who are sensitive to their predicament. In the case of adolescent girls, the need for guidance and counselling is even greater since they have to cope with puberty and the accompanying physiological and psychological changes that place. They also have to consolidate their sense of identity. Some girls become targets of strict moral control by parents and teachers and feel very frustrated about it, especially when they see boys being given so much freedom. Further, in a number of families girls tend to develop internal conflicts and dilemmas since they are made to feel guilty about certain beliefs and practices like not going to a temple during their menstrual cycle or talking to boys freely once they have grown up. All these restrictions create negative images about adolescent sexuality. They may also induce unnecessary feelings of inferiority in the growing girl and impact her self-concept and identity negatively, once again making a strong case for counselling support.

In matters of career choice, many girls are either unaware of the various options available to them or their parents compel them to take up what they consider gender appropriate jobs like teaching, nursing etc. In most cases, they are not expected to be very ambitious regarding their careers and are thus socialized to believe that their career should be compatible with their familial duties. With increasing crimes in semi urban areas and cities, parents are also becoming more and more cautious about their girls' safety and do not allow them to opt for careers which may ask for late hours of working. In the urban scenario, although girls are seen to take up more unconventional careers at par with those of boys, their percentage of representation is still quite low.

It is important for teachers to understand that the problems of girls are many and can be placed on a continuum of severity – starting from minor adjustment problems with family, etc. to major mental health disorders or problems. There are problems related to each front – career, self, inter-personal relationships, striving for a sense of recognition and identity, search for freedom, sensitivity to issues related to body image and appearance, sexuality, low self-esteem, etc.

Thus it is important for them recognize that their role cannot be restricted only to teaching, given that the girls face so many emotional, psychological and social problems and challenges. They have to address the larger issues and concerns in girls' lives as well.

To develop sensitivity and empathy in teachers towards the problems of girls, the activity given in the box below may be conducted.

### Self-Reflection

1. Think and imagine that you are in a time machine. Just go back to your past life and analyze it. Think about the various problems that you faced during each stage. You might have felt at times that you could not share your problems with your friends. Talking to an adult could have helped you solve your problems more than with anyone else. List out at least five such instances of your life.

---



---

2. Think about a time when you felt good about yourself as a teacher, i.e. either any student praised you or said something about you that made you really feel good, about yourself.

---



---

## 6.5 WHAT IS GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING?

Guidance has come a long way from just being restricted to vocational or career

guidance or educational guidance to an activity that now touches all aspects of a person's personality.

The present concept of guidance describes it as a process which makes the individual independent and competent enough to deal with her own problems. Thus, guidance is not about solving the individual's problems, but an adjustment process by means of which the individual is helped to solve problems of educational, vocational, personal or social nature.

Bhatnagar and Gupta (1999) keeping the Indian context in mind, identified the important characteristics of guidance as:

- An integral part of education needed by all.
- A continuous service and a cradle to grave necessity.
- A service meant for the whole child and not restricted to some aspects of her personality.

They defined counselling as the use of a range of techniques and skills routed through a relationship to facilitate a process of positive change from dissatisfaction to satisfaction, pain to comfort, low esteem to high esteem. Counselling is also not centred around a single approach to problem resolution but aims at making an individual more independent.

Bhatnagar and Gupta brought the counsellor closest to the teacher by stating, "The counsellor, like a creative teacher, is an active agent helping the client to become more self-actualized by gaining deeper insights into himself, his potentialities and existence."

Thus, counselling may be considered as a universal need required by all in order to improve their adjustment and quality of life. The aim of counselling is to promote the individual's all round growth and development. It is to prepare individuals and equip them with such competencies as may enable them to make the necessary choices and required decisions without having to

look for help and assistance from others. It helps in the growth of the individual's personality and in the development of a healthy attitude towards life.

An overview of both guidance and counselling shows that both the processes aim to make the individual more competent and contented. Both enable the individuals to learn problem resolution skills, thereby facilitating optimum development of potential and abilities.

Thus, guidance and counselling form an integral part of a growing individual's life, especially needed at critical points, through childhood and adolescence as has already been discussed with special reference to adolescent girls.

More recently, Ranganathan (2012) has presented a framework for understanding guidance and counselling as activities which are integral components of the larger process of education for mental health and emotional well being. They are best understood as helping activities which enable an individual to cope effectively with the stressors and challenges in her/his life, develop a sense of resilience to problems and difficulties and become more open to positive life experiences. In actual conflict and problem situations, it is very difficult to differentiate between guidance and counselling. Hence, in contemporary times, they are referred together. The aims of guidance and counselling, like those of mental health, are to conserve and promote well being, prevent problems from occurring and also to cure an individual afflicted with problems. All these are tasks that teachers have to perform as well. Thus, all teachers are guidance, counselling and mental health personnel as well.

### Self-Reflection

1. Analyze the case vignettes which you read earlier in the chapter again. Discuss what you think would be the difference if you were to give advice

to each of them and if you were counselling them.

2. Reflect upon the changes that will take place in your role from defining yourself as a teacher and a teacher counsellor. Explain how you would react to the statement that "all teachers are inadvertently counsellors."

To help teachers once again to take on the role of counsellors and mental health professionals, the activities provided in the box below may be used.

### 6.6 QUALITIES REQUIRED FOR A TEACHER TO BE AN EFFECTIVE COUNSELLOR

The first step to be an effective counsellor is to know one's students and be sensitive to their needs. There is a small checklist given below to help teachers to understand what basic information they should know about their students.

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Activity in which they love to participate
- Any three strengths
- Any three weaknesses
- Special qualities of the child

As a teacher counsellor, the most important requirement is to exhibit feelings of concern towards one's students. No one expects a teacher to know everything about her students but certainly to be genuinely interested in them. A teacher who is genuinely interested in students and their development would make a conscious effort to know more and more about them, would have enough time and inclination to listen to their problems patiently and actively and would also feel responsible for them.

### How to do this in class

Respondents may be asked to go to different

classes across middle and senior school. They may be instructed to ask the students to tell them about their hobbies and interests, their ambitions and aspirations, the various activities in which they indulge in, in their free time, the changes or problems they have experienced in their transition from primary to middle or from middle to secondary school, etc. Instead of one to one individual talk, a brainstorming session may be conducted. All the responses obtained for boys and girls should be listed out. This will help to provide an overview of gender-wise differences that occur at each stage and build up more concern and empathy for girls. This activity will also help teachers to get an overall picture of both boys and girls – their developmental needs and challenges. At times, when children come with problems, the teacher-counsellor needs to understand that those problems might just be a part of their growing up. For instance, in Class VI, children cannot be expected to sit quietly and do their work for two hours or not be able to pursue the kind of activities they would like to. In senior classes, the girls might hesitate to participate in an individual discussion regarding matters related to sexual development but might be open to a group discussion. Therefore, it is best to hold group discussions, which will help lots of girls to come out with their problems and discuss their concerns in a non-threatening environment.

It is also important for teachers to realize that although they cannot solve all the problems of their students, their role is to help them develop a positive attitude towards their problems and a solution oriented approach. For instance, if a girl from a senior school comes and tells her teacher that though she wants to take humanities, her parents are pressurizing her to take science, the teacher's job is to first know the actual problem. She must analyse whether the girl is taking up

humanities because her friends are taking it or whether she is really interested. She can even talk to the parents of the girl to know their view point. Likewise, a girl in a rural area may be wanting to pursue higher education for which she will have to travel ten kilometers to access a college. Her parents may be reluctant to send her because of the distance factor. In such a scenario which is common in rural India, the teacher can play a very crucial role in convincing the parents and helping her student to realize her dream. The same approach can be adopted for all problems and difficulties.

The teacher's job is thus to collect information from various places without making any presumptions about the students or the problems that they are facing. She has to help the student arrive at the solution, rather than solving the problem for her. She should not be afraid to refer the student to the school counsellor, whenever the need arises, in case she finds it difficult to counsel her herself. The teacher must also be well aware of her strengths and limitations as a counsellor. She has to be non-judgmental and an active listener, responding to the child, and asking open ended and non-directive questions. For instance, if a girl who is generally seen with boys, comes and wants to discuss her problems with her teacher, the teacher must not raise objections or pass value judgements about the girls' behaviour, based on the teacher's own beliefs. It is important for the teacher to keep her personal biases aside and address the problem from the student's perspective.

It is also important for the teacher to be observant and sensitive about various signs and changes that may take place in a student's behavior. For instance, if there is a girl student, who is generally very chirpy and likes to engage in lot of discussions in the class, but, lately has started staying quiet, then, as a counsellor, the teacher

has to be observant about the change in the behavior and ought to discuss it with the student. It is also imperative that as a counsellor, the teacher does not simply listen to the problems of her students, but actively gets involved in them. Her nonverbal cues should exhibit genuine concern and not a cold shoulder.

As a counsellor, the teacher needs to empathise with her students and must focus on their positives. Any single comment by a teacher can send a wrong message. For instance, most of the teachers end up calling the tallest boy to hang up a chart which can also be done by a girl. Likewise, in a situation where a girl is fighting with boys, the teacher simply asks the girl to keep quiet on the ground that girls do not fight.

These kinds of reactions by the teachers send wrong messages to the students. Thus, it is important for the teacher to be fair, open minded and gender-sensitive. The gender issues particularly should be handled in such a way that a healthy gender identity is developed along with a positive attitude towards the other gender.

### Let's do it in class

- The class may be divided into two groups of boys and girls, respectively. Both groups can then be asked to share their ideas on what they think and feel about the opposite gender. They may be asked to reflect on what problems the other gender might be facing.

This will help to bring about a lot of gender sensitivity and awareness. Later, this exercise may be followed by a brainstorming session in the class to share experiences and examples.

Finally, it is important for all teachers to realize that as counsellors, they need to respect the individuality of each student and help her/him realize their potential and capabilities. In the case of girls, this is all the more important.

- Teachers can ask all the girl students to write on what they think are their strengths of being a 'female' and an 'individual.' This can be followed by a brainstorming session for perspective building.

### Self-Reflection

List out any seven qualities of any of your five colleagues. Try to go beyond the physical aspects and the discipline they teach. Are all of them same?

---



---

The answer is most likely to be 'no'. Thus, it is important to realize that if all the teachers who are one's colleagues are so different, so are the students. From this teachers will learn that the uniqueness of each student has to be respected.

## 6.7 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHERS AS COUNSELLORS

As a counsellor, the first step is to collect an in depth information about the student and her problem. For this, the teacher can use various methods for data collection such as a checklist, self-writing analysis, interview and a questionnaire. An eclectic approach can be followed by the teacher counsellor to collect maximum information about the student and to probe all the aspects. Once the teacher has probed all the aspects, it is important to proceed in a more professional manner, lending a personal touch to the counselling process. Various guidance and counselling techniques are discussed in the paragraphs that follow. While reading them, participants may be asked to try to use them for the three case vignettes that were given earlier, or for any other case data that they generated. The techniques may also be applied to any other problems faced by students. The idea is to provide participants with a hands on experience of the steps and techniques involved in guidance and counselling.

The next step in counselling, after collecting information, is to develop the objectives which show the target behavior which the teacher and student want to achieve, after mutual discussion. Then comes the selection and application of appropriate techniques and the actual sessions with the student. Various techniques can be used for guidance and counselling by the teacher. They include the following:

**Rational Analysis:** Generally, when facing a problem, our perception about it gets biased in our own favour. For instance, children, while talking about a fight always show themselves as innocent and their offenders as the villains. As adults, though we might not engage in direct blaming, our perceptions are often coloured in our own favour. Recognising this, as a counsellor, the teacher can help a student understand the situation rationally and deal with it objectively. For instance, if a girl comes to her blaming her parents for not letting her do what she wants, then the teacher can make her analyze the parent's perspective too and develop an alternative perspective and sensitivity to the other.

**Emotional Balance Sheet:** Negative emotions always overshadow the positive emotions when there is a problem. Teachers can help their student prepare a balance sheet in which they make two columns—assets and liabilities. In the assets column, students should be asked to list their strengths. In the liabilities column, they should be asked to list out their weaknesses and on their own suggest the ways in which their weaknesses can become strengths. This will help them expand their self awareness and take responsibility for themselves.

**Disputing Irrational Beliefs:** All of us carry certain irrational beliefs related to various aspects of the problems that we have and our own selves, such as a girl student might feel that she is not capable of doing

anything. It is important for a teacher to deal with these beliefs rationally and then change them, replacing them with more realistic ones such as “I am good at some things and for others, I can improve and learn”. So students have to be helped to analyse whether their beliefs are rational, and if not, then how to make them so.

**Debating:** Debating is a technique used to show both sides of a problem or issue. The student can be asked to debate about the situation from both point of views such as if a girl is having a problem with her parents in relation to choosing her career, she can be asked to give her point of view along with stepping into the shoes of her parents and trying to debate for the views given by parents. This helps in developing a very clear picture formulating a synthesis of both the views. She will automatically at the end of this exercise, begin to take a more rational view.

**Focusing on positives:** We generally tend to see the negative aspects of our ‘self’. A person who talks about her negative qualities is not seen in a very good light. Therefore, the teacher counselor must stress on all students listing their positive aspects and what they see as blessings in their lives, as well. Once they begin to analyse the positives in their lives and in their qualities and characteristics, they do not get so pre-occupied with negative thoughts and self defeating ideas about themselves. This helps to restore confidence in oneself and build resilience to future difficulties.

**Count your blessings:** This can simply be understood as, “I used to feel bad about not having shoes, till I saw a man who didn't have feet”. Teachers can help students realize their blessings in relation to others who may have more serious problems and difficulties. This will help them to perceive their problems as less serious and make efforts to deal with them.

**Confronting Reality:** In this technique, a teacher can encourage her students to openly address the incongruence or personal struggles that they might be facing because their personal feelings and experiences are very different from what society has taught them. Many girls question gender stereotypes for instance despite being socialized to accept them and live with them. Often they develop very bitter feelings within them as a consequence. The idea involved in confronting reality is to bring out these inner feelings of bitterness and address them. Once the real experience unfolds, further steps can be followed.

**Introspection:** This is an effective self help and self analysis technique. Basically teachers can encourage students to begin on a regular basis an inner reflective journey into their life experiences. They can be asked to think about all the significant people who have impacted their lives and the ways in which they have done so. They may also be asked to trace the most memorable and most painful experiences that they have had and how they felt about them and also how they dealt with them. The self analysis can be extended to arriving at a better understanding about one's life. In case there is a disturbed student then the introspective exercise becomes more focused on the problem, its source, its consequences, etc.

**Role Play:** The teacher must encourage the students to think about various problem characters in their lives and similarly identify difficult situations. The students may then be asked to dramatize them. In a role play, the students generally project their understanding of the world and may also come out with various practical and real life solutions. The role play needs to be followed by a discussion to make it more effective. The discussion can be related to the various characters depicted in the role play, how they handled the situation, and what could have been the other alternatives.

**Role Reversal:** Here, the teacher reverses the roles in order to help the students understand the other side of the picture. For instance, if girls complain about boys being non-understanding and dominating, they can be asked to act as boys and express their anguish through the enactment. A discussion would then follow on why the boys behave in a particular way and arrive at what can be done to change their attitudes. This exercise helps in better perspective building and arriving at action plans on what needs to be done further.

**Restatement of Content:** Most of the times when we have problems, we end up mixing up a lot of our feelings. Our thoughts are also not very clear to us. When teachers listen to their students expressing mixed up and complex ideas, they can help to provide more clarity and understanding to them by reflecting back the feelings that the students may have expressed or repeating what they may have said with more clarity. This helps students to understand what their problem or difficulty is and also separate feelings and thoughts.

All the techniques described above can be used individually or in tandem with each other. They can be the guiding principles through which the school environment can be made more conducive to building the sense of self and identity in girls. Besides using these guidance and counselling techniques, the teacher counsellor can use the following strategies in class to develop a more facilitative, conducive and gender friendly environment :

- Students in senior classes, at times, do not understand how to manage time. The teacher can help them learn time management skills by helping them prioritize their tasks, divide their time realistically across the various tasks that they have to do and work towards finishing the task in the stipulated time. The teacher can also help them form a realistic time table/ schedule.

- Certain strategies also need to be suggested in relation to study and work habits to optimize learning. Listening to soft instrumental music while studying might help students to concentrate better, avoiding any phone calls during study hours would also be beneficial, writing small focal points at the end of each concept would be a kind of revision. These and more strategies that can be generated from students' own experiences may be discussed. These strategies apply equally to boys and girls, the implicit message being that there are equal pressures to study and perform on both the groups and the suggested approach is not based on gender differences but respecting the capabilities and needs of both boys and girls to be similar.
- Teachers can also use gender friendly methodology in class to help the students develop healthy interpersonal relationships. For example, in an English class certain gender sensitive issues such as projection of Indian women in media can be discussed. In a History class, where they are studying about various societies, status of women in those societies and how it has changed can also be used to build gender perspective. It is also important for the teacher to break certain stereotypical images related to both the genders by actually making girls and boys do various tasks in class/school which undo the stereotypes. This can be achieved by taking simple steps such as in a Maths class, the problem sums can project girls in unconventional roles, such as, "In a car rally, the driver is to cover a distance of 500 kms. At what average speed, should she drive to finish the race in 3½ hours?" or in Social Sciences, students can be asked to prepare a collage showing how a healthy relationship between boys and

girls can be developed or in various language classes, the stories should project girls and boys in unconventional roles. Instead of teaching, "My mother cooks. My father goes to the office", they can also be taught how knowing cooking and going to office are common and relevant to both men and women.

Even when asking for volunteers to do some physical work, girls must be asked. In decoration and aesthetic school tasks, boys should have equal scope and opportunities. Thus, the teacher must make conscious efforts of inculcating gender parity in the classroom by not dividing the work on the basis of gender but on interest, talent, personal wish, etc.

These are just some of the strategies. Many more can be developed by the teacher based on the concerns and challenges that her students are facing. As a conclusive activity, the two situations described in the box below may be used to sum up the learnings and insights that the chapter provided.

### Self-Reflection

1. Analyze the following situations and develop various strategies for dealing with these issues in the class, as a counsellor.
  - Two students were caught having drugs in the school. Though the Principal is planning to take administrative action against them. You also want to deal with this issue in the class as a counsellor. How will you go about it?
  - A girl and boy in your class are very distracted by each other's presence. You want to help them. Explain how you will counsel them.

---



---
2. Identify and analyze such issues in your class. Try to devise various strategies that you can use while teaching the

students in the class to deal with such issues.

---

3. Do a brainstorming session in your class to find out what your students expect from you as a teacher. Match them with the counsellor.

---



---

### 6.8 REFERENCES

- Bhatnagar, A and Gupta, N. (1999). *Guidance and Counseling: A Practical*

*Approach* (Vol. II). Vikas Publishing House: New Delhi.

- Bhatnagar, A and Gupta, N. (1999). *Guidance and Counseling: A Theoretical Perspective* (Vol. I). Vikas Publishing House: New Delhi.
- Jules, Vena and Kutnick, Peter. (1997). Student Perceptions of a Good Teacher: The Gender Perspective, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol.67: 497 – 511
- Ranganathan, N. (2012). *Education for Mental Health*. Shipra Publications, New Delhi.

© NCERT  
not to be republished

# Life Skills Education in Schools

## Structure of the Module

- 7.1 Overview
- 7.2 Introduction
- 7.3 Objectives
- 7.4 What are Life Skills?
- 7.5 What are the different Life Skills?
- 7.6 Need for Life Skills
- 7.7 Making Life Skills Gender Inclusive
- 7.8 Techniques for Transacting Life Skills
- 7.9 Transaction of Life Skills through Activities
- 7.10 Contemporary Scenario of Life Skills Education in Schools
- 7.11 References

### 7.1 OVERVIEW

Life skills are the skills that enable students to deal effectively with different life situations. Integrating these skills with school education will help to translate the practical abilities of critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making to real life situations. There are a lot of personal as well social issues that need to be addressed by the teachers through these life skills. The present module is an attempt to integrate some broad areas of life skills with education. Related activities, examples and self-evaluation exercises have also been suggested. These can be adapted at elementary level in different school

situations. Efforts have been made to make teachers and teacher educators aware of the concept and significance of like skills. Also, the significant areas for facilitating transaction of these skills through school education have also been suggested. A lot of activities are built in the module for teachers which they can carry out in the classroom settings. Teachers should be sensitive towards these issues and adopt different methodologies and activities to deal with them.

### 7.2 INTRODUCTION

The world has become a global village, with the advent of the new era, rapid changes are taking place, the world over.

Globalization, urbanization, rapid economic growth and phenomenal expansion of media have brought about transformation in the lives of young children and adults. Everyday we hear or read about incidents of aggressiveness, violence, crime, suicide, road rage and discrimination based on caste, religion and gender. The following are the extracts of the newspaper articles which give insights into the social turmoil and challenges confronting the younger generation.

**Read the following newspaper articles:**

**1. Girls abandoned, killed in capital (Hindustan Times 28th January 2011)**

In one month, three children were abandoned by their parents and one was killed – all because they were girls. While two newborns were left with hospital workers, a seven-year-old was abandoned at South Delhi's Ansal Plaza mall on Monday. On January 19, 2011 a newborn girl was found floating in a sewage drain near Sarai Rohilla in north Delhi. Police said she was only a few hours old when she was thrown in. The two couples who left their newborn daughters at the city's Kalawati Saran and Bara Hindu Rao hospitals reportedly did so with the consent of hospital authorities. The reason cited by the parents was that they already had two daughters and could not afford another.

**2. Principal tortures girls for daring to ask for textbooks (Mail Today 5th March 2011)**

Six girls studying in Class VII in a government residential school in Sikandara in Dausa district were ruthlessly beaten up by the Principal when they asked for course textbooks.

The girls had gone to the Principal, Sangeeta Meena, of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Awaasiya Vidyalaya, on Saturday and requested her to distribute the course books. But instead of lending them an ear, Meena replied the books would be

distributed only after directions from the higher authorities.

When the girls pointed out that some of the students had already been issued the books, the Principal lost her temper and began hitting their heads against the wall and then against the iron railings. She then thrashed them mercilessly. The girls, scared and in a bad shape, escaped to the nearby Nihalpura village, where they were taken to the primary health centre by the sarpanch Laxman Singh Fauji.

**3. Catastrophe on the Cards? Mail Today, New Delhi, March 13, 2011**

N-crisis keeps Japan on edge, 1700 people have died in the disaster till now \$15 billion is the estimated total insured loss, 3,400 building destroyed by the tsunami, 50,000/- troops have joined resource efforts and earth shifts 4 inches on its axis.

**4. Cheerleaders of the past? Mail Today, New Delhi, May 16, 2010**

The Khap calls for a ban on same-gotra marriages. Are marriages a way to reassert its grip over a transforming rural society? Less than 200 km outside of Delhi, Kaithal lies on an unobtrusive road in Haryana, dotted with fields of intermittent green, and picture postcard signifiers of India. A little over two weeks ago, this sleepy town found its proverbial 15 minutes of fame, when a Karnal court awarded death penalty to five people and sentenced two others to life imprisonment in connection with the murder of Manoj and Babli – the couple from Karora village in Kaithal district, whose crime was that they were from the same gotra. Contrary to public perception, the khap system is not merely concentrated in Haryana – it is just as prevalent in western U.P. and parts of Jharkhand.

**Self-Reflection**

Now answer the following questions:

1. What are the issues that you can identify from these reports?

---



---

2. Have we equipped our young to handle these life situations as they exist today?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have we moved away from the holistic education of our children towards a modern materialistic education?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do we need to relook into the content and process of education?

\_\_\_\_\_

### 7.3 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the concept of life skills
- To discuss the importance of life skills for both boys and girls
- To develop life skills among students through various activities
- To identify strategies for developing life skills among students.

### 7.4 WHAT ARE LIFE SKILLS?

There is no universal definition of Life Skills. Different agencies have defined it differently. Some of the conceptualizations of life skills are as follows:

The World Health Organization (WHO) (1993) has defined life skills as, “the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”.

United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2004) defines life skills as “a behavior change or behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills”. The document further explicates life skills based education (LSBE) as an interactive process of teaching and learning which enables learners to acquire knowledge and to develop attitudes and skills which support the adoption of healthy behaviours”.

According to the YUVA, School Adolescence Education Programme, Department of Education, Delhi (2005), life skills are individual skills/abilities that each one of us possess and yet, need to enhance in order to meet the challenges of life. Effective acquisition of life skills can influence the way one feels about oneself and others and can enhance one’s productivity, efficacy, self-esteem and self-confidence. Life skills also provide us with tools and techniques to improve interpersonal relations. Life skills are needed for creating a demand and effectively utilizing the existing education, health and other services.

### 7.5 WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT LIFE SKILLS?

A lot of thinking and social skills are considered as life skills. Different agencies list different skills as life skills. However, life skills are temporal, spatial and contextual, and subject to changes and modifications from time to time, place to place and in the context of the specific student seeking them. It must also be noted that skills relevant during any period may not be useful for all cultures and regions and for all times. Different life skills have been evolved and emphasized depending on the purpose or mandate of the organizations involved. However, there are ten areas of core life skills which have been identified as important. These also appear to constitute the core of life skills education in schools.

List of ten core life skills:

• Self awareness	• Problem solving
• Empathy	• Effective communication
• Critical thinking	• Interpersonal relationships
• Creative thinking	• Coping with stress
• Decision making	• Coping with emotions

(Source: UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, YUVA and NCERT)

NCERT in its Report 'Saksham' (1998) identified some additional life skills, which include:

- Household related skills
- Accessing public services
- Family related skills
- Environmental sensitivity
- Legal literacy

*(See Appendix 2 for meaning of each Life Skill mentioned here)*

## 7.6 NEED FOR LIFE SKILLS

Till now we have discussed the concept of Life Skills and we also know about different skills which are components of different life skill programmes. The question that emerges now is why do we need Life Skills? Why should they be made part of any school curriculum? The answers seem to lie in the following arguments:

- In today's world it is the individual rather than the system that constitutes the basic unit of the society and so it is important that all individuals develop skills which will prepare them to make informed choices and deal with the daily life stressors. There are certain core life skills which they must learn. The list includes, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, self-awareness, coping with stress, decision making, creative thinking, generative thinking, interpersonal relationships and empathy.
- School education plays a very important role in providing skills to students to help them build a link between themselves, their environment and the community/society to which they belong.
- Some students complete school education with ease. Others may be early dropouts. These young boys and girls who drop out, become men and women, enter life, build families and work for their living without having had exposure to necessary basic life skills

to lead a healthy quality life. Many of these men and women become future aspirants for working with Panchayats, administration and local bodies. Only if they are alert citizens and well informed human beings will they be able to fight social evils.

- Life Skills are needed to make appropriate decisions and to act upon them. They enable the individual to know 'what to do', 'when to do' and 'how to do it' while facing the challenges of real life situations.
- The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2000 prepared by NCERT emphasized on integrating Life Skills with Education, it stated that "education needs to be intimately linked with the different life skills. ... It is through these skills that students can fight the challenges of drug addiction, violence, teenage pregnancy, AIDS and many health related problems. In NCF (2005), life skills have been woven in with adolescence education and mental health.
- Life Skills would also make students aware of issues such as consumer rights, questioning the quality of goods and services available to them, and redressing grievances if any, to the manufacturer and civic authorities about the quality of goods and services that they expect.
- Legal literacy and understanding of civic and administrative procedures would also be made available to students so that they can take initiative and action when necessary. Life Skills would also serve to sensitise students about their rights and duties towards their environment

## 7.7 MAKING LIFE SKILLS GENDER INCLUSIVE

The development of life skills should take into cognizance the different social, cultural

and regional variations that mark Indian society. In fact what needs to be factored in is that both rural and urban children have their own strengths and capabilities, a finite set of life experiences and their own set of needs. A common programme will thus not work for all. The life skills identified for them have to be contextual and congruent with their specific needs and the goals envisaged for their development. What has to also be kept in mind is that students at different stages of development have different needs. They have their own feelings which manifest behaviourally as well.

In addition, from the lens of gender beliefs, it is important to understand that life skills are gender neutral. They are thus equally valid for boys and girls.

They are meant to develop equal competencies and positive attitudes among both boys and girls. A gender inclusive approach must thus be used for the transaction of life skills education in schools.

### **7.8 TECHNIQUES FOR TRANSACTING LIFE SKILLS**

Since life skills are dynamic in nature, they cannot be learnt on the basis of information, dissemination or discussions alone. They have to be integrated into school spaces and activities in a way that classroom learning processes become joyful and all school activities become fun filled and engaging. Transaction approaches that focus primarily on experimental and experiential modes of learning are considered effective for life skills development. Hence, we need to make a clear departure from didactic top-down, non-interactive and assignment driven methodologies that focus mainly on transmission of information and imparting knowledge to learners. Teaching techniques that integrate active learning need to be incorporated into a life skills programme to increase its efficiency. This requires that all learning be made experiential so that there

is a direct encounter with the phenomena being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter. The rote learning style of education cannot facilitate life skills development as participants merely sit passively taking in information and subsequently merely memorizing the lesson. Life skills learning can be facilitated by use of participatory and interactive teaching and learning methods. The role of the teacher expands considerably. Her work and engagement have to move beyond lecturing to becoming more facilitative. It is also important to understand that children learn not only from the teacher, but also from their peers, so while planning transaction strategies, this can be kept in mind. Use of participatory and interactive methods, which address skills, values and attitudes and act as information providers are useful not only academically but also practically, for they help students to have hands on experience and build skills which can subsequently be honed and polished.

Participatory Learning methods such as – listening to and telling stories; reading and analyzing dialogues, scripts and stories; quizzes; group conversations and discussions on focused themes, singing and dancing; drawing and painting; creation and construction of various types of models; compositions and creative writing; brainstorming; excursions; drama, role-plays, pantomime, peer observation and analysis; language and maths games such as crosswords; all kinds of competitions; development of maps, e.g. of the community; measurements and calculations; practical work; developing and asking questions/surveys; carrying out projects, exhibitions, are illustrative examples which can be incorporated as a part of the Life Skills Education Programme. The list is very long and exhaustive but the beauty of it is that all the components in it are integral to school activities. Thus the scope for integration of

life skills into existing spaces and activities in school is tremendous.

## 7.9 TRANSACTION OF LIFE SKILLS THROUGH ACTIVITIES

### (a) Theme: Self Awareness

**Objective:** The activity would help the students to know more about their physical and emotional self and develop a positive attitude towards life.

**Life skills used:** self awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving and decision making

**Methodology:** The students can be asked to write few sentences about their physical self, their likes and dislikes and identify the star icon or role model of their choice. The teacher can ask the boys and girls to respond separately so that a larger pool of responses is collected. The responses received can then be categorized and classified into the physical self, social self and emotional self. The teacher can also reflect upon the differences in the responses of the boys and girls, the larger goal being gender parity and heightening sensitivity to the other gender.

Discussions could be conducted on the media portrayals of men and women and themes such as adolescent love, heterosexual attraction, etc.

The students may be asked to state what they liked about the star icon and which aspect of the self appealed to them the most. The main aim of this activity is that the students learn to respect their inner self and understand and respect gender differences. The teacher can explain the concept of body image, how it affects our self esteem and dispel different myths about body image.

The session should go on to taking up points of confluence and contradiction in boys and girls across different contexts and situations which the teacher can elicit through students' experience

sharing session, or she can simply use different situations which she constructs spontaneously and get students to analyse. The idea is to build life skills and an attitude of respect for the other gender and ability to perceive gender differences as complementary.

### (b) Theme: Social Sensitivity – Making a difference

**Objective:** The activity would help the students to :

- understand that in India everyone has equal right to live and express their feelings;
- develop respect towards our elders and family members;
- understand that everyone can contribute in the society;
- understand the importance of public property.

**Life skills used:** self awareness, creative thinking, critical thinking, empathy, effective communication, coping with emotions.

**Methodology:** Divide the students into three groups and ask them to share an instance when they experienced humiliation or feelings of disrespect. Brainstorm on issues reported in the newspaper related to children, women, dalits and communal rights. Guide students towards arriving at problem solving strategies and list out some actions that could be taken to improve the situations presented in the articles. Invite someone to the class who works for such self-help groups, NGOs or does community service and discuss with them as to what they can do to deal with such issues. Boys and girls should be involved equally to show that they have the same potential and abilities to plan, analyse, visualize, strategise, etc. Also the idea that girls can crusade change and voice resistance must get highlighted. The idea is not to develop life skills alone, but to succinctly tackle gender parity, as well.

### **Dalit girl reprimanded for riding cycle through village (News from PTI, August 24, 2005)**

Mamata Nayak, who wants to be a teacher, was reprimanded by upper caste villagers for daring to ride on the village road.

Mamata, belonging to Narasinghapur village under Khandagiri police station, is the first girl from her caste in the village to be a matriculate and had taken admission in a college, seven kms away. But as she cycled her way to college, passing through the nearby Nanput village, the local residents objected.

The villagers convened a meeting where the matter was discussed and Mamata's father Ghanashyam Nayak and other family members were warned against allowing the girl to ride through their village.

The disheartened girl stopped going to college for a couple of days. Then encouraged by others, she resumed. However, when she reached Nanput, she walked with her bicycle through the village and rode after crossing it.

She had no option but to go take the route at least during the monsoon. "I cycled to college everyday as it is not possible to walk seven kms to reach it...I think there should be a separate road to our village" Mamata said.

At the college, she has never experienced any discrimination among the students. "Students belonging to upper castes received me warmly. I have never felt that I come from a poor, Dalit family. I am happy in the college." she said.

**Hindustan Times, New Delhi March 15, 2011**

## **Dalit girl raped, burnt alive**

**Pradip Kumar Maitra**

pradipmaitra@hindustantimes.com

**NAGPUR:** A Dalit girl, 12, has been raped and burnt alive near Khairlanji in Bhandara district by his cousin through luring her with a candy.

Reports say Ankush Ramdayal Gajbhiye (26), a resident of Dushala village, 100 km from Nagpur, took the girl to his farm on a cycle by giving her a

sweet candy and then reportedly raped her.

The girl screamed, but her shouts went unheard and she fell unconscious.

This scared Ankush, who poured kerosene on her body and set her afire.

Yadav Rao Thakre of the police control room said the crime came to light following an enquiry by the victim's parents on Saturday night as a vil-

lager informed them that he had seen Ankush with the girl.

The villagers then caught Ankush and beat him before he allegedly confessed the crime. They later handed him over to local police, before whom he reportedly admitted to his offence again Dushala is 10 km away from Khairlanji, the village where a crowd killed four Dalit members of a family in 2006.

Students may be made to read the two news items in the boxes above and the boys in particular should be asked to spell out what they would do in both the situations. All students may then be asked to write a letter to the Editor of the local newspaper about a gender issue that needs immediate

attention. They may be asked to organize a class debate or a panel discussion using their teachers as resource persons for the same. The activity should be concluded by building perspective on gender and building all the life skills that the activity lent itself to.

### Respect for Elders

Students should be made to understand the importance of being respectful and caring towards elders and others. This can be done through role play and discussions. Students can be asked to enlist the different family members who live together in their homes. If some of them respond saying that they stay with elderly people in their respective families, then discussions can be initiated that our elders deserve our respect and caring attitude. The target goal of this activity should be the development of empathy and developing reverence for the contributions of the elderly, especially women. The group can then be guided towards a role play (see box below) which embodies the targeted themes and goals.

Shaiza a student of class IX was travelling to school on a bicycle which was three kilometres from her house. One day while coming back from school she saw an old lady of the village carrying a heavy bag of grocery items in her hand from the city which was near the village. The old lady was gasping for breath after every ten steps and sitting to take a breath. Shaiza saw her discomfort and offered to carry her bag on her bicycle and walked with her slowly till she reached her house. She handed over the bag to the old lady once they reached the house. The old lady thanked Shaiza and gave her lot of blessings. Shaiza told the old lady that in future if she needed anything from the city, she could tell Shaiza and on her way back from school, she could buy it for the old lady.

After the role play, teacher can discuss that older people in the family need love, care and respect. Respect for elders is a major component of Indian culture. Elders are the driving force of any family and love and respect for elders should come from within. Also students can be asked to list out what the contributions of the old woman to her family must have been over the years.

### Use and Care of Public Property

Students need to understand how they can

make a difference and contribute to society. They need to own up public property and be made to realize the inconvenience caused to others by their irresponsible behaviours.

For this, a role play can be conducted in the class based on the theme of two friends.

Jayant and Prateek are studying in same school and same class and living in the neighbourhood. On their way to school, Prateek walks quietly, whereas Jayant picks up a stick and starts hitting the branches of plant and trees. When he reaches school, he throws his bag on the desk and picks up chalk sticks and scribbles on the walls and the desk. He then throws ink on the floor. Prateek tries to stop him but Jayant pays no heed and asks him to shut up. Prateek tries to explain that the school belongs to all the students and it is the duty of each student to maintain the school property. The school arranges a visit to the historical monument. There also Jayant tries to scribble on the walls of the monument without realizing that he is destroying the national heritage.

One day Jayant's naughty cousins come from village and start playing with his toys. They break the toys, scribble on the walls of the house and on his study table. They even break Jayant's favourite music instrument. Jayant gets very angry and starts crying. He tells his friend Prateek about it in school. Prateek then makes him realize that he too often destroyed their school property and monuments and reminds him of his irreverential attitude. Make students discuss this role play and also make them imagine that if both had been girls instead, how the story would have unfolded.

Initiate a discussion with the students on the behaviour of Jayant and Prateek

- Whether Jayant's behaviour was appropriate?
- Do we all behave in a similar manner? If yes, why?
- What do you think are the correct things to do?
- How would have Jayant felt when he

saw his own things being destroyed by his cousins?

- What have we learnt from the role play?
- How can one contribute to our society and make a difference in the present and in future?
- Encourage them to think, keeping in view what they can do now and what they would like to do in future.

### (c) Theme: Say No to any Kind of Violence

**Objective:** Students would be made aware about the different forms of violence prevalent in society and become sensitive to refraining against such violence. They would learn how to protect themselves against becoming victims of violence, especially girls.

**Life skills used:** self awareness, critical thinking, coping with stress, problem solving and decision making.

**Methodology:** Students can be asked about the different forms of violence that

they are aware about. They will mention hitting, choking, biting, throwing objects at the person, bullying pushing, criticism, threat, rape and lately acid attacks, etc. The teacher should categorize their responses into different forms of violence: physical, psychological, emotional and sexual. The teacher can then discuss real case studies with them and build up perspective on the perpetrators and victims of violence and the role and responsibilities of every individual in safeguarding against violence. To give a gender contour to this, the cases and examples taken up for discussion must be such that they permit boys to build up understanding on how most crimes arise because of assumptions of women being inferior that they carry in their mindsets. The fallacy of this must be exposed. Some examples of women voicing resistance and taking a pro- active stand in seeking gender justice may also be discussed. An illustrative example that can be used is given in the box below:

## A change is in the offing



• Delhi police selected 37 women whose kin died in the line of duty and recruited them as constables. They are at present undergoing training at Police Training College, Jharoda Kalan, in Delhi.

RAJ K RAJ/HT PHOTOS



• Meenu, 21, is the daughter of late head constable Vijender Singh of Delhi Police. Her father died in July 2011 while on duty.



• Lalita Devi, 35, has a double masters' degree. Her husband sub-inspector Rajbir Singh died on June 11, 2012. She has two daughters.

## A first: Woman cop leads charge on goon

**NEW DELHI:** Inspector Arti Sharma made history on Wednesday.

She not only became the first woman officer of Delhi police to lead an all-male team but also faced firing from an armed criminal on Wednesday evening, two days before International Women's Day.

Veteran of many an operation, Sharma, 47, not only led the eight policemen to trap wanted criminal Arvind Sharma but also showed alertness and courage when he opened fire at the team. One of her team mates, head constable Shyam Lal, was injured in the firing.

Senior police officers have praised Sharma for her courage and are planning to nominate her for a gallantry award. Also, two male members of her team, including Lal, will get out-of-turn promotion.

"She is the first woman inspector to lead a team. This is the first time that a team led by a woman officer nabbed a wanted crimi-

nal," additional CP (Crime Branch) Ravindra Yadav said.

Yadav said Inspector Sharma and her team had laid a trap at Janakpuri around 9:30pm. He said the team knew that Arvind Sharma was going to come to collect money from someone.

"He was in a black Santro car. Inspector Sharma and her team immediately surrounded his car but he opened fire twice to escape. Head constable Shyam Lal was hit," Yadav said.

Talking to the media, Inspector Sharma said, "We knew that he would be armed, so we went fully prepared."

Her advice to other women: "Don't be scared and always face life with determination and courage."

HTC



### MORE ON WEB

For more pictures of new recruits of Delhi Police during their practice, log on to

[www.hindustantimes.com/womencop](http://www.hindustantimes.com/womencop)

The teacher can explain the unequal power relations between men and women in society through the discussion of innumerable crimes directed against women. All these discussions can be well understood within a gender framework. Gender based inequality exists in all stages of women's lives from infancy to adulthood and to old age. The example of gender based violence visible at different stages throughout the lifecycle as given by International Centre for Research on Women and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) can also be highlighted by the teacher. It is presented below.

#### Prenatal

- ↓ • Pre-birth elimination of females
- ↓ • Physical battery during pregnancy—

enforced sexual intercourse during pregnancy

#### Infancy

- Female infanticide
- Differential access to care, nutrition, healthcare, education

#### Childhood

- Child marriage
- Child sexual abuse Child labour
- Child prostitution/trafficking
- Differential access to care, nutrition, health care, education

#### Adolescence

- Molestation/eve teasing
- Rape
- Incest

- Sexual harassment at the work place
- Domestic violence
- Forced prostitution
- Trafficking
- Violence associated with pre-marital pregnancy, abortion
- Differential access to care, nutrition, health care, education
- Kidnapping and abduction

#### Youth and Adulthood

- Domestic violence
- Marital rape
- Dowry related abuse and murder
- Coerced pregnancy
- Homicide
- Sexual harassment at the work place
- Molestation, sexual abuse, rape
- Differential access to care, nutrition, health care, education
- Desertion

#### Old Age

- Abuse of the elderly (forms affecting women more than men)
- Abuse of widows
- Threat of sexual violence
- Lack of access to care, nutrition and medical facilities.

### Domestic Violence and Manifestation of Domestic Violence

Violence within the home is widespread and affects women throughout society – in wealthy urban households as much as in the poorest rural households, across all religious, class and caste boundaries. Domestic violence (DV) refers to any act of violence in the house – it includes differential treatment of girls, wife beating and abuse, torture of daughters-in-law and neglect of widowed women in the family. The perpetrators are close relatives of the woman – father, husband and his family, sometimes even the son. Domestic violence is generally a part of the abusive behavior and control rather than an isolated act of physical aggression. Physical violence in intimate relationships is almost always

accompanied by psychological abuse and, in one-third to over one-half of cases, by sexual abuse.

#### Manifestations of Domestic Violence:

- **Physical abuse** – hitting, slapping, kicking, punching, burning, choking, using physical objects to cause injury, control over reproductive rights and health.
- **Mental abuse** – threats, dictating what a woman can and cannot do, verbally abusing, humiliating the woman or her parents, not allowing the woman to leave the house or visit her natal house.
- **Sexual abuse** – rape, unwanted touching, forcing sexual acts, refusal to practice safe sex.
- **Economic or property abuse** – stealing or destroying personal belongings, demanding money, withholding basic needs such as food and clothing, not allowing the woman to work.

The teacher can make students aware about the 'Domestic Violence Act 2005' which recognizes the right to violence free home and provisions to prevent violence. The teacher can discuss these with the students.

### 7.10 CONTEMPORARY SCENARIO OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

All national systems of school education which include the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and many State Boards of Education have introduced Life Skills Education in their respective schools. Material, Modules and Training have been given at the apex level for onward implementation in affiliated schools. Private schools have developed their own material and approaches. In most cases, life skills have been woven in with issues and facets of Adolescence Education. Life skills have also been

integrated into different school activities like the school assembly, social, cultural and literary activities, community work etc. The potential to link life skills with gender is tremendous. Not only does this imply that both boys and girls be given equal exposure to life skills education, it also means that gender inequalities, disparities and practices which limit the opportunities and chances for girls, rendering them weak and vulnerable, can all be addressed through life skills education. Judicious selection of material and experiences for students in this regard, combined with sensitive teachers, can make a major contribution to this. Every school can take the initiative to take this ahead.

### 7.11 REFERENCES

- Catastrophe on the cards? (2001), *Mail Today*, March 2013, New Delhi.
- Cheerleaders of the past? *Mail Today*, May 16, 2010, New Delhi
- Coming of Age, from Facts to Action for Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health, (1997). WHO, Geneva (WHO/FRH/DM/197.18).
- Dalit girl reprimanded for riding cycle through village (News from PTI, August 24, 2005).
- Dalit girl raped, burnt alive (2011), *Hindustan Times*, March 15, New Delhi.
- Girls abandoned, killed in Capital (2011), *Hindustan Times*, January 28, New Delhi.
- A change is in the offing (2013), *Hindustan Times*, March 8, New Delhi.
- Handbook for teachers for School Adolescence Education Programme, (2005), YUVA Department of Education: Delhi and Delhi State AIDS Control Society.
- National Curriculum Framework for School Education, (2000). NCERT, New Delhi.
- National Curriculum Framework (2005), NCERT, New Delhi.
- Principal tortures girls for daring to ask for textbooks, *Mail Today*, March 5, 2011.
- Report of the Workshop on Integrating Life Skills with at Elementary Stage, (2002), DWS, NCERT, New Delhi.
- Report of Gender Sensitive Life Skills Approach to Curriculum Transaction at the Elementary Stage, (1998). Sakasham, National Workshop organised by SCOPE, UNFPA and NCERT, New Delhi.
- School Life Skills Programme, Handbook for Teachers and Parents, (2009). YUVA, Vol. 6.

# Development of Leadership Qualities in Girls

## Structure of the Module

- 8.1 Overview
- 8.2 Introduction
- 8.3 Objectives
- 8.4 Gender Inequality and the Role of Education
- 8.5 Girls' Leadership and Specific Leadership Qualities
- 8.6 Strategies to Develop Leadership Qualities in Girls
- 8.7 Fostering Leadership in Girls
- 8.8 References

### 8.1 OVERVIEW

Since the last three decades, significant attention and emphasis have been given to issues surrounding the girl child. Efforts are being made to help them realize their full potential as agents of transformation in their particular communities and societies. A number of schemes have been introduced to encourage more and more girls to derive the benefits of education.

For most girls who are in mainstream education, the skills and competencies that they are exposed to in schools are usually deficient in leadership development. Very little thought is given to the potential that schools hold for preparing young girls to be future leaders. Basically as part of their leadership development, girls can be enabled to do the following:

- Critically analyze their life situation and the social structure in which they live.
- Think about themselves and plan for their lives ahead.
- Communicate their views and feelings to others effectively.
- Take their own decisions.
- Identify the role that they can play in societal issues and concerns.
- Play an active role in their communities.
- Bring about a positive change in their own lives as well as in the lives of people around them.
- Become future role models for other young girls.

This module aims at providing strategies to teachers for the development of leadership qualities among young girls. Studies have shown that developmentally, the age span

between 8 and 10 years is an appropriate time for girls to learn specific skills. Not only is it an impressionable age, but the propensity for girls to retain, practise, and rehearse what they learn is very high. Thus a lot of what they have learnt at this stage is likely to percolate into their adulthood. This is also the age when girls have not yet been initiated into their future gender roles and, therefore, they are relatively less inhibited and fearful of society. They also have relatively more time to play and learn, since subsequent to adolescence, they get deeply involved in their familial responsibilities.

## 8.2 INTRODUCTION

A wide gap between the status of a boy and a girl is a typical feature of any patriarchal set up, and India is no exception. Although the values of equality and justice for all are enshrined in our Constitution, but parity between the status of members of both genders continues to be a daunting task. Despite mass campaigns against sex determination and female foeticide, the birth of a female child in many communities and homes is still somewhat unwelcome. In homes where girls are 'allowed' to take birth, the male child often remains the favorite among family members. The birth of a male child not only brings joy into the family, but also promises a higher status to the mother.

During their growing up years, many girls face discrimination in terms of access to education, health care facilities and in getting opportunities to participate in socio-political spaces. The onset of puberty marks their sudden transition into womanhood. Subsequent to this, it becomes imperative for them to follow strict clearly defined codes of conduct and behaviour. In many parts of India, the practices of child marriage, early marriage, early motherhood, etc. impede the education of girls. In large families, the older girls are seen to take on the responsibility of taking care of their younger siblings and performing household chores. Even

if we consider the changing face of urban India and take into cognizance the growing importance of education given to the girl child within the middle class context, we still cannot ignore the familial and traditional expectations which circumscribe her life. She is always perceived as the primary caretaker and nurturer of the family.

In India a woman's identity is shaped largely by her family relationships. Most often she is known as someone's daughter, wife, mother or daughter-in-law. Even her personal experiences of her femininity are constructed along the lines of social norms. Right from her birth she is socialized to fit into her future feminine roles. She is expected to be a caring, loving, woman for whom her own dreams and desires feature only after the wishes of her family and later her husband and his family. Her contribution in making and taking care of the household and raising children also goes unremunerated. She is expected to subordinate her individual will, desires and pleasures to family peace and happiness.

Most sociologists who work on women centric issues, have linked the causes of women's subjugation and exploitation to factors of caste, class, religion and region. Although the extent and form of subjugation may vary across these categories, the overall situation of Indian women is not very promising. A lot of well educated and working women too face abuse and violence inside their homes and at their work places. They have no control over their own lives and often find themselves trapped within their stereotypical roles.

In such a context where social and gender inequalities persist, there is a diminished chance that a girl would grow up to be an independent and empowered woman, despite the provision of policies and laws which are made to protect and empower women. In the face of such glaring realities, it is only desirable that such strategies be incorporated and adopted

within the education system, that provide opportunities to girls to become confident, independent and self assured. Probably, the solution lies in nurturing leadership skills. Leadership skills can help girls to become well informed of possible threats, develop awareness about the rights and laws provided for their development and protection, enable them to articulate their needs in a more befitting manner, actively participate in decision making and bring about larger social transformation through their thoughts and actions. Further, since as young girls and adolescents, their voices often go unheard, one of the main aims of leadership development in girls is to rediscover their voice and agency and capacity to participate in public life.

### 8.3 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the social structures of Indian society which lead to gender inequality and the possible role of education in minimizing these inequalities.
- To comprehend the meaning of leadership in the context of the education of the girl child.
- To identify specific leadership qualities which are important for girls' empowerment in India.
- To equip teachers with strategies to develop leadership qualities among girls.

### 8.4 GENDER INEQUALITY AND THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

Gender discrimination and patriarchal domination are two hard hitting realities of Indian society. Girls face discrimination with respect to their access to food and medical facilities, education, wages, etc. To further illustrate the plight of a girl child let us read the case vignette that follows.

**Case 1:** *Lakshmi already had one daughter, so when she gave birth to a second girl, she killed her. For the three days of her second child's short life, Lakshmi admits,*

*she refused to nurse her. To silence the infant's famished cries, the impoverished village woman squeezed the milky sap from an oleander shrub, mixed it with castor oil, and forced the poisonous potion down the newborn's throat. The baby bled from the nose, then died soon afterward. Female neighbors buried her in a small hole near Lakshmi's square thatched hut of sun-baked mud. (From Dahlburg, Where Killing Baby Girls' is No Big Sin)*

Killing of an unborn or newborn girl child is just one of the forms of injustice experienced by girls in India. In his inaugural lecture at the new Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University, Prof. Amartya Sen illustrated at least seven different forms of gender inequalities prevalent in India i.e. mortality inequality, natality inequality, basic facility inequality, special opportunity inequality, professional inequality, ownership inequality and household inequality. Many of the girls never even know that what is being done to them is unjust and unethical and thus they keep on bearing it as part of their destiny. In order to fight this injustice, it is imperative that girls develop full awareness about their life situation and the nature of different forms of injustice and violence that they are vulnerable to. They should also know about the legal rights provided by the state to protect their interests. The only way to help girls become informed and empowered is through education.

The National Policy on Education (1968), advocated girls' education not only on grounds of social justice, but also because of its potential to accelerate the process of social transformation. Likewise, the National Policy of Education (1986) also reiterated the role of education as an agent of basic change in the status of women. The UN General Secretary, Kofi Annan expressed the same view in his belief that investment in girls' education would translate directly and quickly into better nutrition for the whole family, better health care, declining

fertility, poverty reduction and better overall economic performance.

To achieve its role as a means of empowerment and social transformation, education will have to be such that it takes into account the all round development of girls and their smooth transition into adulthood. Curricular and co-curricular aspects of school education should be designed in a manner that they make girls confident and competent enough to bring about personal growth and social transformation in their lives.

As a beginning, in the school, girls should be encouraged to think critically. Correct and age appropriate information, safe spaces for expression and opportunities for creative problem solving, decision

making and community activities should also be made part of their daily school life. The following activity may be tried out with learners in school or participants in a training programme.

Informing the girls about their position in society is crucial to girls' upliftment and emancipation as they can only do something about their situation once they are aware of it. In the classroom, a teacher should discuss the gender stereotypes that exist in our society and their role in women's subordination. Teachers should encourage girls to share their experiences, perspectives and questions with the whole class. Learners could be given activities where they collect data regarding the issues related to girls in their families and/or locality.

**Activity:** Ask the learners/participants to take a look at the picture below:



Ask the learners what comes to their mind after seeing these pictures. Based on their answers discuss the following with them:

- Gender roles in India
- Gender discrimination
- Impact of discrimination on the self of girls
- Tradition of child marriages and its impact on the body and life of young girls
- Role of education in bringing parity between the two genders
- Constitutional and legal provisions meant to safeguard women's interest.

### Activity

In a household, work is often divided amongst the various members of the family. You may ask your learners to find out what kind of household work is being undertaken by each of their family member. For this, you may give you learners the following activity sheet to take home and bring back the next day after filling it:

- Name of the Student:
- Number of members in the family:
- Number of females in the family:
- Number of males in the family:
- In front of each household chore, fill in the name and gender of the family member performing it regularly:
  - Sweeping:
  - Mopping:
  - Dusting:
  - Washing clothes:
  - Washing utensils:
  - Electronics shopping:
  - Buying vegetables:
  - Taking children to the doctor:
  - Filling water:
  - Helping in homework:
  - Taking care of the pets:
  - Cooking food:
  - Serving food:
  - Taking care of the elderly:
  - Stitching:
  - Cutting vegetables:
  - Paying bills:
  - Changing electrical fuse:
  - Driving:

The next day, based on the collected data, you can have a discussion in the class, where you can explain the role of household chores in defining gender roles. You can also sensitize the learners to realize the importance of household activities and decision making.

### 8.5 GIRLS' LEADERSHIP AND SPECIFIC LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

There exist numerous definitions of leadership but none of them is universally accepted. Different authors define it differently. Models and theories of leadership define it in terms of traits, styles, contexts or transformation. A lot of available literature describes leadership from a more task-oriented, corporate/business/managerial perspective, where often a leader is in a hierarchically superior position and his role is generally to lead his fellows/subordinates towards successful goal achievement.

For understanding leadership among girls, there is a need for a more holistic

framework which not only takes into account the need for community involvement, civic engagement, personal growth and social transformation by girls and women, but pays due attention to their basic quality of empathy. Most literature on girls' leadership advocates youth leadership approaches to be an apt basis for developing girls leadership models. The youth leadership model views leadership as a broad umbrella which encompasses a whole gamut of qualities and components which change from one context to another. According to a research review by the Girls Scouts Research Institute, U.S.A., a youth leadership approach advocates for youth to become active participants and learners with a focus on the positive skills,

attitudes, and behaviors centered on civic involvement and personal goal setting.

A research study was done by the Girls Scout Research Institute, U.S.A. in 2008. In their study, they explored how girls look at leadership. According to the findings of this research study young girls were found to be redefining leadership in more meaningful terms. It meant having personal principles, ethical behavior and the ability to effect social change. Although the context of this study is foreign, its inclusion is justified by the categorization of leadership that it portends. These can be adapted and applied in the Indian context as well.

The study identified five categories of leadership among girls based on their general attitudes, goals, aspirations and behavior.

- **Leadership Vanguard:** Here the persons already think of themselves as leaders and actively desire to be leaders. They have the highest self-confidence, higher focus on academic, personal, and career success, and high social change values.
- **Ambivalent Leaders:** Here, the youth think of themselves as leaders and would not mind being leaders, although leadership is not expressly a goal for them. They share most of the attributes and behaviors of Vanguard leaders, only to a lesser degree.
- **Hopefuls:** Here the persons want to be leaders but do not think of themselves as leaders. They are not as confident as the Vanguard leaders, or even the ambivalent leaders.
- **Unmotivated:** In this type, persons would not mind being leaders but do not think of themselves as leaders. They have relatively low self-confidence and are unmotivated to pursue leadership opportunities.
- **Rejecters:** In this type, youth do not want to be leaders and do not think of themselves as leaders. This group

of girls and boys has the lowest self-confidence, feels powerless to change the world, and is more likely to believe that leadership cannot be learned.

In a small survey conducted by the author, a group of young adults were asked to list qualities that they attach to good leaders. The qualities that they suggested are enlisted below:

- Confidence
- Radicalism
- Creativity
- Social
- Flexibility
- Responsibility
- Positive attitude
- Punctuality
- Efficient time-management
- Inspirational
- Team Spirit
- Trustworthy
- Rationality
- Good-listening abilities
- Emotional intelligence
- Strength of character
- Charisma
- Democratic outlook
- Intelligence
- Optimism
- Sensibility
- Good networking
- Clear instructions
- Positive self-image
- Humility
- Compassion
- Transparency
- Informed
- Sensitivity
- Awareness
- Calmness
- Composure
- Ethics
- Right judgment
- Motivational

- Hard work
- Decision making ability
- Innovation
- Problem solving skill
- Vision
- Assertiveness
- Resourceful
- Reliability
- Wise
- Determination
- Independence
- Communication skills
- Self-discipline
- Conscientiousness
- Altruism
- Self-awareness

From the above discussion, one can summarize that a leader is one who is confident and has a dynamic personality with the capacity and competence to bring about personal growth and social change.

### Activity

Ask your learners to form themselves into groups of four. Give them ten minutes to think and come up with a name of leader who they think has been very effective. After ten minutes give them a small questionnaire, with the following questions to think and fill up.

1. Write the name of your favorite leader?

---



---

2. What does he/she do?

---



---

3. What according to you are the qualities that make him/her a good leader?

---



---

4. Do you think leaders are born or made? Why?

---



---

5. Do you think it is important for a person to have leadership qualities? Why or why not?

---



---

6. Discuss their answers in the class.

---



---

**Purpose:** The above activity would allow you to understand how leadership is viewed by the girls in your class. It would also allow the girls in your class to reflect upon the need, significance and attributes of leadership for an individual.

### 8.6 STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP QUALITIES IN GIRLS

It is the school that formally equips children/students with skills that help them to adjust to the environment. Further, since

school is one of the initial agents of a child's socialization, it is important that a strategic approach towards the development and promotion of leadership skills, particularly for girls, is adopted by the school.

What has to be understood as a starting point is that the process of developing leadership qualities in girls at school is not a one time thing. It has to be a sustained process in which the strategies are carefully integrated into all aspects of school life. The present module discusses these strategies at two levels. First, some specific strategies aimed at the inculcation of specific leadership qualities are presented, followed by some general recommendations for the school ethos that will help to further the process.

As discussed earlier, leadership is a broad term which encompasses a number of qualities. These qualities change in number and in nature from one context to another. This section identifies particular qualities which are crucial to the development of leadership in girls.

**(a) Building the Confidence of the Child**  
Self-confidence is an important component

of leadership. A confident person is more open to challenges and less fearful of social norms and threatening situations. Girls are usually victims of the social resistance to their active participation in public life, tend to develop fears and inhibitions through the process of socialization and take a back seat in all situations of decision making. This leads to the development of feelings of inadequacy and low-self regard in them which in turn become barriers to the development of leadership qualities by them.

A teacher should thus make early beginnings to deal with the situation. Focus should be on building the confidence of girls by encouraging them to participate actively in classroom activities. They should be encouraged to share their views in class. The teacher can also talk to them and ask them about their fears, worries and concerns. They could be asked to make a presentation before the whole class to help them overcome their fears and improve their articulation and expression skills. However, there should be no coercion or pressure to do so.

### Activity

This activity would be done in pairs, so select a partner. Identify a locality near your school, for this activity; each pair selects one house in that locality. With your partner go to the house selected by you and find out the following details:

Total members of the family: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children in the house: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of female children in the house: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of male children in the house: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children with school-going age: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of male children going to school: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of female children going to school: \_\_\_\_\_

Are all children with school-going age, going to school? If not, Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

After coming back to the classroom discuss the findings of the learners. Is there any disparity between the number of girls and boys going to school? If yes, discuss with learners what can be done about it. Make it into a mini project where learners critically analyze the factors which hinder education of children in general and girls in particular in India. Ask them to make a small presentation before the class. They can do this individually where the group leader would share the views of the whole group, or they may present it as a whole group. Encourage them to meet the members of the local governing bodies and present the problem before them and request them to make appropriate efforts for other children in their locality to get proper education.

**Purpose:** By doing this activity, learners would be able to identify and analyze the

social issues present in their environment. They would be able to gain confidence by meeting new people and presenting their views before them.

### (b) Developing Safe Spaces for Girls

Building a safe, supportive and girl-friendly classroom environment, where girls feel free to articulate their perspective is of prime importance. Girls would feel emotionally safe when they share a relationship based on trust with the teacher. Teachers have to thus check for the presence of any kind of bullying, harassment, labelling, targeting, name calling or insensitive teasing. A teacher should make efforts to keep the class gender sensitive and strive to empower the girls by eliminating gender stereotypes.

Girls may be provided tasks which help them to identify their own special talents and skills, making them aware of their own personalities and potential as agents

### Activity

Young girls learn better with the help of audio-visual aids. Many animated characters often become role models for young children as observation is a potent agent of learning. Any animated movie depicting a girl leader may be selected and used. For example, the stories of 'Meena' by UNICEF, can be shown to the learners. Meena is a little village girl, goes to the local school with her younger brother. She is seen to solve many problems of people around her, engages in a lot of community action and does many things which are not generally believed to be a girl's job like, mending a tractor.



of social transformation in their society. They can also be given opportunities to play and explore without unnecessary rigid structures that limit them. It is generally seen that girls in our society get less time for self-discovery due to being busy with their traditional domestic roles and also defining their identities by them.

An informed person is able to take better decisions, so girls may be provided with age appropriate information regarding the issues relevant to them. A teacher can hold discussions on topics like abuse, body image, adolescence related changes, social issues, personal hygiene, peer pressure, relationships, etc. Teachers may also include information about women's socio-political and economic oppression. In addition, girls should be made aware of the constitutional provisions and laws which have been made to protect their interest.

### (c) Identifying Same-sex Role Models in their Community

It is important that girls have role models to look up to from their own gender. As part of

their teaching, teachers may include stories of female leaders from diverse backgrounds, who have made their mark in different fields of excellence. They could include information about the deeds of courage, confidence and intelligence demonstrated by young girls. Learners may be asked to find out/interview the girls getting bravery awards during Republic Day celebrations. Such real life-experiences would inspire and encourage the girls to voice their thoughts and participate in civic action.

**Purpose:** Through this given below activity, learners would be able to identify women leaders in different walks of life. Leadership is often seen as synonymous with political leadership. After this activity, learners would be able to holistically understand different dimensions of women's leadership across diverse fields.

### (d) Developing a Spirit of Inquiry and Critical Thinking

In Indian society, girls are expected to obey the instructions of the family, without

#### Activity

Show the learners the following flashcard and ask them the names of the women who feature. Ask them if they know the field of work to which each one of these women are associated. Discuss each of the identified women and their achievements. Tell them about their impact on the larger society and the struggles that some of them have undergone during the course of their life.



critically analyzing them or questioning them. This makes girls mere followers of societal norms. Due to their lack of questioning, girls often unknowingly, end up propagating the same. Think of ways to promote diverse thinking and encourage creative problem solving strategies using the activities and situations drawn from their daily life. Do not judge or criticize the girl's unconventional ideas as by doing so one can inhibit her from expressing herself.

### Activity

Help your learners to perform a skit. Give them a theme related to issues of girls in India. Ask them to prepare a short skit. Assign different roles to the learners based on the characters in the story, preferably female roles for boys and male roles for girls. Then after a period of preparation, ask them to perform before the class and hold a class discussion after it.

Daughter: Mother, can I go outside and play?

Mother: No.

Daughter: Why?

Mother: Because I said so.

Daughter: But brother is also playing outside with his friends.

Mother: Boys play outside, while good girls stay at home and help their mothers in household chores.

Daughter: Mother, if all girls stay and do household work, then how do we have Sania Mirza, P.T. Usha, and Bachhendri Pal in our country?

Mother: (Silent).....

**After the performance ask your learners the following questions:**

- What do you see in the skit?
- What could be the title of the skit?
- Have you ever come across such a situation in your home?
- Do you think girls should not play outside? Why or why not?

- Do you think boys and girls should have equal opportunities to play? Why or why not?
- Why does the mother in the play not want her daughter to go out and play?
- Had you been in the place of that girl, how would you have convinced your mother to allow you to go out and play?

### (e) Developing Decision Making Abilities

In order to improve decision making skills, learners could be provided with conflicting situations where they have to decide which one is better in a particular context. Teachers will have to remind them to think first before making any choices and explain to them the importance of critically examining a situation and the consequences before making a decision.

Present the following situations to them. Give them five minutes to think about them. After five minutes ask each learner to discuss what they would do in such a situation.

#### Situation 1

One of your classmates tells you that she has seen your best friend stealing things from the bags of your other classmates. This is difficult for you to believe as you have known your friend for many years now. Also, you don't know if it would be appropriate for you to confront him/ her on the basis of something you heard from another person. In such a situation, what would you do to find out the truth? What will you do if you found out that your friend has actually been stealing things from your classmates?

#### Situation 2

You are the monitor of your class. Your teacher asks you to discuss with your classmates and come up with a place for the annual class picnic. After a long discussion the whole class gets divided into two groups. One group wants to go to the History museum while the other group wants to go

to an amusement park. None of the groups is ready to compromise. As the monitor of the class, you have to help your class reach a consensus. What would you do to democratically resolve the conflict so that everybody agrees to go to a single place?

### **(f) Encouraging Civic Participation**

A lot of social issues around us go unnoticed by us because often we are so preoccupied with our own problems and we don't have the time to pay any attention to our surroundings. By and large, we are not taught to empathise with others and do something for our community or society. That is why we never speak when someone teases a girl on the road, or when a small child hits a dog or when a neighbor chops down an old tree for blocking the sunlight from reaching into his balcony.

Drawing from this backdrop, learners should be made aware and encouraged to take interest in the issues present around them. They should be encouraged to take part in awareness drives, rallies and marches. Teachers could design special activities that involve hands on experience and problem solving methods as well.

### **Activity**

Ask your learners to identify an ecological issue in their environment like garbage dumping, sewage system, ecological depletion, etc. Discuss each issue elaborately in the class including the nature of the issue, its causes and its possible solution. Then take up one issue and organize an ecological drive on any holiday.

For example, if one of the girl tells you about a large open area being used for dumping garbage. A lot of flies and mosquitoes are hovering around this dump due to which a lot of people in that area are falling sick. Apart from that the components of garbage and its stench have really polluted the area, but nobody is taking any action. You can encourage your learners to organize a cleanliness drive

to help bring the attention of the locals towards this issue. The learners can also meet the local authorities to get the garbage removed and the area cleaned. Make a list of all the material required e.g. poster, banners, clean handkerchiefs etc. Also take prior permission of all the authorities involved. Plan the whole drive in advance to avoid any last minute mismanagement.

**Purpose:** An ecological drive would be a good way of sensitizing your learners to the ecological concerns present around them. Organizing the whole drive and carrying out the whole activity would enable learners in the planning and execution of community service. It would encourage them to be confident and take active part in civic issues.

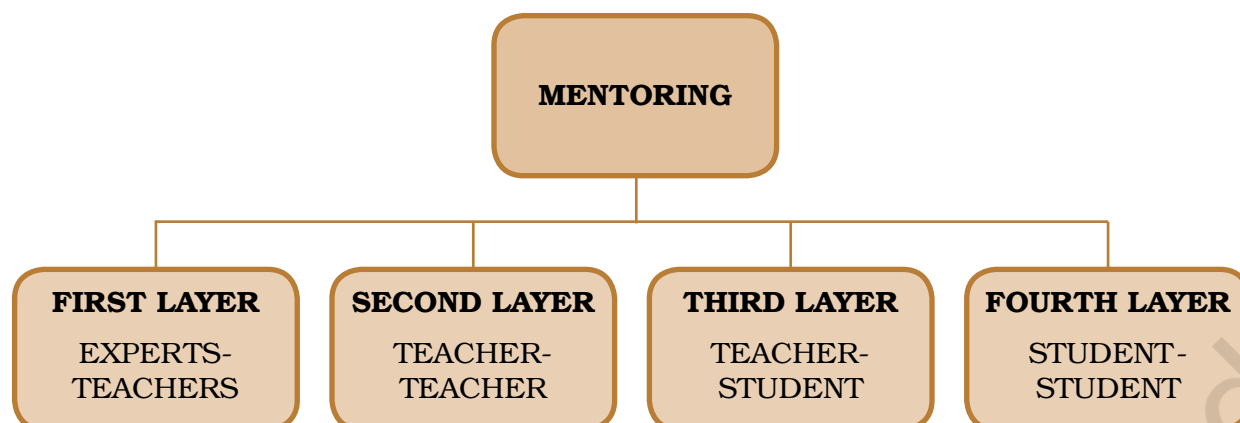
### **(g) Improving Peer-interaction and Networking**

Teachers should make effort to enhance peer interactions. The groups should be re-shuffled from time to time so that there is greater mixing among learners. This would help them to become more open, flexible, and tolerant and even accept others. It would also encourage better adaptation among them. Learners could be asked to perform activities in pairs, in small groups and in larger groups, where they get to discuss issues, share views and resources, develop social skills and learn to create support networks.

Teachers can encourage girls to participate in sports activities as it teaches them to follow rules, play with teammates and value the contribution of each member towards achieving a common goal. Apart from keeping their bodies healthy and providing for emotional catharsis, sports activities also teach them to develop winning strategies, team spirit, coping with failure and enhancing social skills.

### **(h) Girl Mentoring**

Inside the school while all the efforts for girls' self-awareness and empowerment are going on, there is a possibility that teachers



as well as learners may face some problems or have certain queries. To deal with such problems and for constant support and encouragement there should be some form of mentoring. Mentoring could be of a multi-layered nature.

**First Layer:** Expert resource persons working in the area of leadership should be called from outside to help and support teachers. They could discuss methods of developing leadership among girls in India. Non-Governmental Organization like CARE can be contacted to talk to teachers about the recent trends in girls' leadership development. These agencies could be asked to provide mentoring to regular teachers through seminars, workshops and discussions.

**Second Layer:** More experienced teachers can guide and support younger and comparatively new teachers into the task of developing leadership qualities among girls.

**Third Layer:** At this layer each teacher would mentor selected learners, the teacher-student ratio may vary according to the number of both teachers and students. The mentor would guide and support the learners. She would discuss their problems and help them to find solutions to it.

**Fourth Layer:** Older girls can form support teams, which would help younger girls in the process of developing leadership skills. They could be asked to discuss things and share experiences with the younger girls.

Each of these four layers should be interconnected so that the process becomes more transparent, productive and successful.

### 8.7 FOSTERING LEADERSHIP IN GIRLS

Leadership is not some trick that can be taught to learners in few simple steps. It is an attitude that a person imbibes through various ways. That is why a school has to integrate both curricular as well as co-curricular aspects. In fact, post NCF (2005), all that transpires in a school is considered curricular. The dichotomy ceases to exist. Some of the strategies suggested in this regard, include:

- Giving girls a fair representation in the prefectorial system, where they get an opportunity for active discussions, decision making, and skill development.
- Utilizing the school assembly to sensitize girls towards their status and rights given to them by the state.
- Encouraging them to participate in sports activities. Those who show promise should be provided special training and fitness regimes.
- Theatre could be used to make girls aware about the issues and concerns in their lives and society. The selected themes and plot should be such that they evoke questions in the mind of the audience.
- Talks, seminars, and workshops on leadership may be organized which

might help the teachers and learners to update their knowledge and skills and also enable them to evolve newer strategies to develop leadership qualities amongst their learners.

- In the co-education settings, male learners and teachers should be sensitized towards gender discrimination and stereotyping. They should be encouraged to participate in gender sensitive activities and discussions.
- To identify natural leaders, informal activities like cultural festivals, trips and girl camps could be organized. Those who show better leadership qualities can mentor their other classmates in developing them.
- Such opportunities should be created for girls, where they can exhibit a number of leadership qualities.
- Schools should promote positive interpersonal skills. This would help girls to meet new people and create support networks for themselves.
- Encouraging girls to take interest in science and technology. This would help them to develop a spirit of inquiry. Interest and competence in the area of technology would help them become more confident and self-reliant.
- Schools should delegate responsibilities to girls to help them gain confidence. After the successful completion of one task, they would be keener to volunteer for the next.
- In the library, books about female leaders and achievers that inspire girls to themselves aspire to be leaders, must be made available.
- School may also organize parenting workshops where parents are sensitized towards gender discrimination and importance of leadership qualities for girls.

Thus, schools and teachers can play a vital role to inculcate traits and abilities through leadership programmes, by means of which they would be able to achieve the goal of women's empowerment. Such programmes would not only obliterate the notion of gender stereotyping but foster gender complementarity. Girls at school may also be seen as potential leaders in Panchayati Raj Institutions, particularly in rural areas.

## 8.8 REFERENCES

- *Change It Up! What Girls Say About Redefining Leadership*. 2008. Girl Scout Research Institute [http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/original/girl\\_scout\\_research\\_study\\_march\\_27\\_2008.pdf](http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/original/girl_scout_research_study_march_27_2008.pdf)
- *Exploring Girl Leadership: Research Review* by Girls Scouts. 2007. [http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/reviews/exploring\\_girls\\_leadership.pdf](http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/reviews/exploring_girls_leadership.pdf)
- *The Power to Lead: A Leadership Model for Adolescent Girls*. 2008. CARE India. [http://www.care.org/campaigns/2009/downloads/SigProg\\_PW\\_Leadership.pdf](http://www.care.org/campaigns/2009/downloads/SigProg_PW_Leadership.pdf)
- *The New Girls' Movement: Implications for Youth Programs*. 2001. HGHW. [http://www.cpn.org/topics/families/pdfs/New\\_Girls\\_Movement.pdf](http://www.cpn.org/topics/families/pdfs/New_Girls_Movement.pdf)

# Nurturing Sports and Physical Education among Girls and Women

## Structure of the Module

- 9.1 Overview
- 9.2 Introduction
- 9.3 Objectives
- 9.4 History of Women's Sports: The Indian Scenario
- 9.5 National Sports Policy for Girls and Women: Some Key Recommendations
- 9.6 Health and Physical Education in Schools as Reflected in NCF-2005
- 9.7 Gender Relevant Terms: Definitions
- 9.8 The Gender Question in School Sports: Some Considerations
- 9.9 Role of Socialization
- 9.10 Strategies for Enhancing Sports and Physical Education in Schools from a Gender Lens
- 9.11 References

## 9.1 OVERVIEW

Though girls and women constitute almost half the population of our country, the number of women participating in physical education and sports is very less as compared to men. Till very recently, sports for women did not get the attention of the parents, community and even the women themselves. Media too gave wide coverage to men's sports, obliterating the presence of women sportspersons. Socialization practices have generally inhibited girls and women from participating in games and other outdoor activities. Social norms like purdah, early marriage, puberty and dress

codes have kept girls and women deprived of physical activities. The fear of losing one's femininity, being accused of being westernized, resistance to unisex looks and parents' attitudes about gender appropriate behaviour have induced inhibition among many girls to be active in sports. However, over the years, women activists, researches in women's studies and media have collectively brought in seeds of change and built up awareness about the myths and fallacies that exist in the form of societal beliefs and attitudes in this regard. As a consequence, women's sports and games have begun to receive patronage from the government and public at large.

## 9.2 INTRODUCTION

“Within the sound body lives the sound mind.” This is a well-known proverb which appears to be very relevant in the context



of the school curriculum as well. The merit of sports and physical education in promoting physical, emotional and mental well being has been emphasized time and again by various research studies. Besides harmonious development of the body and mind, sports helps in the cultivation of varied life skills such as team spirit, interpersonal skills, courage, sportsmanship and perseverance. They also help to inculcate human and social values such as concern for others, for peers, for the community, build a sense of patriotism and promote international understanding.

Physical Education as a discipline and as a part and parcel of the curriculum comprises instructions, guidelines and training in physical exercises and games, especially in schools aimed at promoting bodily fitness and strength. The word physical has been derived from the medieval Latin word, ‘*physicalis*’ which in turn originates from the Latin word ‘*physica*’ meaning physic. The word ‘sport’ involves games or competitive activities leading to physical exertion and has been derived from the medieval English word ‘Desport’ which originated from the Latin word ‘*disporto*’ meaning carry away. Sport also means recreation, which brings relaxation and rejuvenation of the body and mind.

There are three kinds of sports which are generally popular. They include: (a) Indoor sports; (b) Outdoor sports; and (c) Adventure sports.

(a) **Indoor Sports:** Indoor sports are played inside a building or in a covered space. Some of the popular ones are Carrom, Ludo, Lego, Bowling, Table Tennis, Chinese Checker, Braino, Mechano, Trade, Cards, Tambola, Scrabble and Chess.

(b) **Outdoor Sports:** Outdoor sports are undertaken in the open air or in the playground. The popular ones include Swimming, Athletics, Weight Lifting, Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, Lawn Tennis, Cricket, Hockey, Football, Volleyball, Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Wrestling, Judo, Karate, Taekwondo, Badminton, Boxing, and Squash

(c) **Adventure Sports:** Adventure sports are played for the sake of fun and adventure. These kinds of sports have an element of risk and



danger. The most common and popular adventure sports include River Rafting, Camel Safari, Bull Fight, Boating, Surfing, Skiing, Skating, Trekking, Climbing, Mountaineering, Horse Racing, Car Racing, Cycling, Motorcycle Racing and Water Polo.

There are some sports that can be played both indoors and outdoors like swimming and basket ball.

### Self-Reflection

1. Why do socialization practices inhibit and deprive girls from participating in sports and physical activities?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. In what ways can sports and physical education help to enhance the personality traits of girls?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which sport or physical activity do you personally feel interested in and why?

---



---

4. Collect and analyze the data in a tabular form about the type of sports or physical activities being pursued by 15-20 girls in your neighbourhood or in a particular school.

---



---

5. What efforts would you make to change the gender stereotypical mindset of girls and their parents with regard to sports and physical education?

---



---

### 9.3 OBJECTIVES

- To identify the factors that account for the lower participation of girls in sports and physical education in schools.
- To understand the issues related to gender stereotyping in sports and physical activities in schools.
- To build awareness about the history of women's sports at the national and international levels.
- To review the role of government policies in enhancing sports and physical education amongst girls and women to formulate strategies for enhancing the participation of girls and women in sports.

### 9.4 HISTORY OF WOMEN'S SPORTS: THE INDIAN SCENARIO

Indian women participated in international athletics for the first time in the Helsinki Olympics in 1952. Following this, the Indian women's hockey team participated in the



international events in U.K. and Australia in 1953-54 and in 1956 respectively. Subsequently, they won the Asian Hockey Championship. Thus, Indian women have shown their talent whenever they got an opportunity. Media, both at the national and international levels, applauded the efforts of Sayeeda Sultan, a young Indian girl, who was selected as the world's table tennis champion in Vienna. India's track sensation P.T. Usha was the first Indian woman to enter the final Heat in the Olympics in 1984 at Los Angeles in the 400 meters hurdle race. Karnam Malleswari won a gold medal in the world weightlifting championship and a bronze medal in the Sydney Olympics held in the year, 2000. Through her outstanding performance in lawn tennis Sania Mirza has broken all shackles for Indian girls. Indian women's participation and achievements have continuously been growing in the field of sports. The International Year of Women in 1975 embodied the theme of 'Equality, Development, Peace' which translated into action in sports by the participation of girls and women. It saw the commencement of the National Sports Festival for Women, an event that is celebrated every year. The sporting talent search scheme at the All India level further helped in promoting sports among girls. Opportunity to get training in athletics from distinguished national and international trainers was also provided to talented young girls. Thus women's sports got noticed and started receiving due attention.

In spite of many efforts by the government and sports organizations, the participation and achievement level of girls and women in sports and physical activities has always been lower when compared to their male counterparts, at the national and international levels. In order to enhance participation and to strengthen the quality of sports and physical education amongst girls and women, it is important that an organized and well planned effort from a

gender perspective be carried out by the school authorities. An attempt may be made to introduce more gender equitable practices in the area of sports and physical education in schools. In fact, the onus of responsibility for the elimination of gender bias and stereotyping lies with the schools. They can play a very influential role in mediating attitudinal change in the mindsets of the students, parents and community as a whole.

### 9.5 NATIONAL SPORTS POLICY FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN: SOME KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

India's National Sports Policy reiterates that the participation of women and girls in sports and games needs to be encouraged. It recommends emphasis being given to the identification of sports talent among women, and making provisions for sports scholarships, coaching and nourishment support to promising girls, with a view to improve the standards of their performance in competitive games. It also suggests that programmes such as scouting, guiding, camping, N.C.C., etc. need to be expanded and strengthened, for they help in cultivating qualities like endurance, team work, decision making, resourcefulness, work ethics and social skills among girls and women. Further, girls and boys need to be given due opportunities at all levels of schooling for participation in sports and physical education. This would bring in them the feeling of togetherness, equality, empowerment and a spirit of true friendship. Special significance has also been given to women's education in the country's planned development.



### 9.6 HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS AS REFLECTED IN NCF-2005

The National Curriculum Framework –2005 very clearly highlights that, “health is a critical input for the overall development of the child as it also influences enrolment, retention and school completion rates significantly”. It adopts a holistic definition of health within which physical education and yoga contribute to the physical, social, emotional and mental development of the child. It recommends the need to address this aspect at all levels of schooling with special attention to vulnerable social groups and girl children. Thus, as a core part of the curriculum, the suggestion is that time allocated for games and yoga must not be reduced or taken away under any circumstance. Health and physical education must continue to be a compulsory subject from the primary to the secondary stages, and an optional subject of the higher secondary stage. At this level, it needs to be given equal status with other school subjects.

#### Self-Reflection

1. Discuss amongst your colleagues the scenario of sports and physical education of your school and few other schools from your experience and observation.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Prepare a chart of ten sports women stars of national and international level, preferably from ten different sports.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 9.7 GENDER RELEVANT TERMS: DEFINITIONS

- (a) *Gender* can be described as a culturally defined pattern of behavior and social interaction ascribed on the basis of

sex. The term is particularly related to femininity and masculinity.

- (b) *Gender Bias* exists when either sex, male or female is treated less favourably than the other because of the belief that people's abilities are determined by their sex.
- (c) *Gender Stereotyping* occurs when certain behaviours are considered to be predominantly appropriate and expected from either males or females without taking into consideration their individual interests and abilities.
- (d) *Gender Inclusive Resource and Curriculum* by its content, illustration, language and methods gives value and validity to girls and women, their knowledge and experience, equally with boys' and men's knowledge and experience, by individual interest and ability, rather than according to sex role stereotypes.
- (e) *Non-Sexist* approach is applied to attitudes, behaviours, practices and systems which accept individual differences in personality and capability and are opposed to the rigid definition and imposition of sex roles.
- (f) *Gender Equity*: Gender equity exists when both males and females are expected and encouraged to pursue interests, subjects, careers and lifestyles which are determined by individual interest and ability, rather than according to sex-role stereotypes.

### 9.8 THE GENDER QUESTION IN SCHOOL SPORTS: SOME CONSIDERATIONS

If both girls and boys have to make healthy life style choices, then they need access to an inclusive, broad and contemporary sports and physical education programme during their schooling years. Equal access to the same activities in sports and physical education to girls and boys however may still not mean that there will be equal outcomes. In fact, physical education and sports lessons could be the important site

in which a more androgynous gender identity in both boys and girls gets constructed. Traditionally speaking, some activities



are considered girl specific while some are considered boy specific. The gender specificity in the activities related to sports and physical education is speculated to be very obvious due to the gender identity perceptions resulting from socialization practices. A study carried out in 25 government, government-aided and private schools of Delhi on the status of sports and physical education from a gender perspective at NCERT by Jairath, Sushma (2001) brought to light gender biases and stereotypes in the attitudes of girls and boys, and in educational practitioners including the Head teachers. The gender question became secondary whether it was a single sex-boys school, single sex-girls school or a co-educational school since there was a predominance of boys. So, if the status of sports and physical education for girls in schools has to improve, the fundamental issue is creating a facilitative mindset in the attitudes of all school personnel, policy makers and parents of girls. In all schools, particularly girls' schools, availability of facilities, coaching, infrastructure and legitimate time and space in the school schedule are also important factors that need to be addressed. The gender beliefs that impede equality in sports between boys and girls have to take primacy over all other considerations. The ideal situation would be one in which gender equality and quality in sports endeavours go hand in hand.

### 9.9 ROLE OF SOCIALISATION

Stereotyping in sports is very evident when girls mainly play kho-kho while boys play cricket. Although sports and physical

education periods are shown on the school timetable, the sanctity of using these slots effectively is



not followed in most of the Government schools. Sports teachers in many instances are asked to teach other subjects along with sports. It is also a common observation that in co-educational schools, boys get attention in sports while girls get more attention in other cultural activities. In these schools, sports teachers are generally males and girls shy away from physical education. Even when there is a female teacher, the attention is given more to boys for sports and to girls for dance and music programmes. Further, the minds of teachers, parents and community are pre-occupied with the importance of studies and achievement, relegating games and sports to a relatively insignificant position. Games periods in schools are often treated like free periods. In many schools, sports and physical education exist only as a ritual for sports day. Or for preparing for interschool sports tournaments in specific games. Generally, sports competitions are held for games like cricket, football and hockey for boys' teams. In girls' schools, sports and physical education teachers concentrate on P.T., kho-kho and indoor games, that too with minimal support or patronage. At times, games periods are treated as free periods for the girls and their teachers alike. Further, there is hardly any emphasis on non-traditional sports. In most private schools, although sports and physical education are given full emphasis, studies and academic achievement are given much more importance due to extensive curricula having to be covered and a demanding evaluation and examination

system. Thus those with visible sports talents are identified and nurtured so that they can represent their school in various tournaments, but the remaining students tend to take it as a ritual which is part of the school time table. With respect to yoga as well, although it is very healthy to have yoga classes, it is seen that if the yoga teacher is a male, the focus is on boys. Older girls have problems and inhibitions that often make their presence in a yoga class for namesake alone. Moreover, a proper dress code is needed for conducting yoga classes. Often girls from government schools may not be able to afford a special yoga dress. In many schools it is also seen that no proper space is allocated for yoga classes and therefore, it is the theory and not the practicals which take place.

#### Activities

1. List women achievers in sports at national level and write the achievements of any two.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Find out women in sports of your state and prepare biography of any one.  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 9.10 STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING SPORTS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS FROM A GENDER LENS

Some strategies to nurture sports and physical education among girls are as follows:

- **Promoting equal access and equal participation of girls from different socio-economic backgrounds in sports and physical education activities in schools:** Girls from all the strata of the society should get equal opportunity and access to all kinds of sports and physical activities in schools. For this minimum facilities need to be created

in schools for conventional and non-conventional sports.

For example, sports like cricket and hockey also should be introduced in girls' schools. Girls' teams need to be formed and any



and any stereotypical attitude needs to be corrected at the school level. Similar efforts need to be made regarding the organisation of games such as kho-kho and skipping for boys. Such games could also be made popular among them.

- **Eliminating gender bias and gender stereotyping in the choice of different sports and physical education activities:** Choices to play and participate in all kinds of physical activities need to be given to both girls and boys. Achievement of girls and women in sports need to be emphasized and biographies of some eminent sports women of India may be included in content areas like science and languages. Women achievers in different areas of sports may be invited to interact with students and their parents, particularly those of girls. This will help in changing their mindset.
- **Sensitizing the physical education, sports and yoga teachers for promoting quality and serious sports among girls:** The gender component also needs to be integrated in the pre-service and in-service training of physical education and yoga programmes. In-service training and orientation programmes may be organized for sports, physical education and yoga teachers to improve the quality of sports and to promote seriousness about it in schools, particularly amongst girls.

- **Furthering the cause of sports in India, particularly for girls and women at the Policy level and its implementation:** The efforts of the government in promoting women's sports need to be disseminated extensively amongst teachers, girls, women, parents and the community. From the National Sports Policy, the components related to girls and women, and incentives and schemes like, scholarship programmes, particularly those meant for girls and women need to be discussed with the girls and their parents. Such efforts are likely to raise consciousness about the importance of sports and games.

#### Activities

**Dwell on the following and put together your views. This can also be done as a discussion:**

1. How can media play a vital role in promoting women's sports?
2. How participation of girls in school sports can be enhanced?
3. As a teacher, what efforts will you make to change the attitude of the school authorities towards sports and physical education and optimal utilization of sports funds annually?
4. As a teacher how will you encourage girls to participate in unconventional sports?
5. Organizing school parents-community meets and working towards positive mindsets for sports and physical activities for girls and women.

#### 9.11 REFERENCES

- *Annual Report (2000-2001)*. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, pp. 28-57.
- Australian Sports Commission (1995). *Possible primary and secondary effects. A research study presented in the "Conference on Active Girls Campaign: the Consequences of Girls and Boys*

- Participation in Physical Activity*", Department of Human Movement Studies, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Australia.
- *Beyond the Threshold: Indian Women on the Move* (1995). Eds. Yashoda Bhatt and C.N. Mangla, pp.301-329., Delhi. B.R. Publishing Corporation.
  - Bhatnagar, R.K. (2001). *Beyond the Last Mountain*, *Education Times*, Delhi Edition.
  - Bhadauria, M. (1997). *Women in India: Some Issues*, New Delhi, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation
  - Cenbosec (Special Issue). 1997-98. *Competitive Sports Programme*. Delhi, Central Board of Secondary Education: Delhi.
  - De Beauvoir, Simone. (1970). *The Second Sex*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf.
  - Jaireth, Sushma (2001). *Study on the Status of Sports and Physical Education in Delhi Schools from a Gender Perspective*, Unpublished Report, Department of Women's Studies. NCERT, New Delhi.
  - Jaireth, Sushma (2001). *Study on the Status of Sports and Physical Education from a Gender Perspective: A Study of Delhi Schools*, Paper presented in the "National Seminar on Inter-Sectoral Linkages in Education" New Delhi..
  - David, Kirk and Macdonald Founn (1955). *Consequences of participation pattern in physical activity. A study presented in the "Conference on Challenging Perspectives on Girls and Boys Participation in Physical Education"*, Department of Human Movement Studies, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Australia.
  - *National Curriculum Framework* (2005), Publication Department, New Delhi, NCERT
  - *National Policy on Education* (1986). Department of Education, MHRD, Government of India, New Delhi.
  - *Programme of Action* (1992). Department of Education, MHRD, Government of India, New Delhi.
  - *Rendezvous: Give Sports a Chance*, (2001). H.T. Horizons, *Hindustan Times*.
  - Sandhu, Kiran (1993). *Sport Dynamics*, New Delhi, Align Publications Pvt. Ltd. and Galgotia Publishing Company
  - *Sixth All India Educational Survey*, (1998). Publication Division, NCERT.
  - [www.hinduwoman.org](http://www.hinduwoman.org)
  - [www.indianwomenonline.com](http://www.indianwomenonline.com)

# Women in Unconventional Roles: The Power of Role Models

## Structure of the Module

- 10.1 Overview
- 10.2 Introduction
- 10.3 Objectives
- 10.4 Women who Broke Stereotypes – Some Success Stories
- 10.5 Teachers as Motivators
- 10.6 Introducing the Concept of Non-traditional Jobs
- 10.7 Reviewing Existing Material on Career Guidance
- 10.8 Engaging and Educating Parents
- 10.9 Successful Role Model Strategies
- 10.10 Guidance and Counselling
- 10.11 Conclusion
- 10.12 Other Invisible Women
- 10.13 Reference

### 10.1 OVERVIEW

Women have often hesitated to leave their homes, or work outside their farms; and more often prefer to teach in a nearby school. But the scenario is gradually changing. Women have come a long way, since the times they were confined within their domestic domain and restricted to strict distinction of occupations based on gender. Attitudes and mindset of society are also gradually changing, though one cannot overlook the prevalence of stereotypical gender roles in societies. Women have begun to seek emancipation outside these

set roles and are progressively making their way into unconventional and hitherto male-dominated arenas. Providing a barrier free environment to women and enabling them to pursue education and employment opportunities are the need of the day and continues to remain an important socio-economic concern.

The module seeks to highlight some of the success stories of those girls and women who have made a mark in professions that have been dominated by men. They have opted for professions which are considered unconventional, and many have succeeded

in carving a niche for themselves despite belonging to humble backgrounds. But the achievements and contributions of such women have not acquired visibility which they actually deserve. It also takes into account the important role of the teachers and various strategies to encourage and facilitate women's entry into various roles which were once denied to them.

## 10.2 INTRODUCTION

Many Indian women do not have access to basic educational opportunities, thus making advanced or professional education out of reach to most girls and only realistic for those belonging to the middle class and elite sections of society. Providing access to basic education and literacy in India is the foremost barrier to their access to higher education and subsequent career opportunities. Our inability to provide them with career and employment oriented education on an equal footing has not only undermined their role in the economy; it has also resulted in low utilization of their skills and capabilities. The trend of women preferring to enrol in greater proportions in arts and humanities and social sciences as compared to mathematics, science and technology is a phenomenon which is prevalent the world over. The origin of this under representation of women has largely been structural, created in and through the social structures of institutions and segmentation in the labour market, and internalised in values and beliefs about appropriate roles and expectations.

There is need to enhance the participation of women in fields related to science and technology. But a glaring reality is that girls and women have not found opportunities to participate equally either in education or in the pursuit of science and technology. Women continue to have poor command over a range of productive resources including education, information and financial resources. Moreover, women's work is

grossly under-valued, so also are their skills in the world of employment. And even if they have managed to find employment, the cultural taboo about working outside the home is so strong that in most traditional Indian families, quitting work is a necessary precondition to the wedding itself.

Stereotyping is another factor which affects the status of women in technical and professional fields. Women continue to opt for traditionally female occupations even when they have access to all professions. They continue to remain over-represented in typically female professions such as teachers, nurses, doctors, secretaries, etc. and underrepresented in skill related jobs in those, which require responsibility. One of the main reasons as to why girls, women are hesitant to take up unconventional jobs is the customary barriers connected with women entering non-traditional jobs. Moreover, there are misconceptions about women's abilities to perform in what have been traditionally regarded as men's jobs. For long, the image of an ideal woman has been that of a home maker and her role in society has largely been that of a passive observer. This image has further been reinforced by the media which is equally responsible for an unfair and stereotypical portrayal of women in traditional roles. Providing a barrier free environment to girls women and enabling them to pursue education and seek employment opportunity is an important societal concern.

Being victims of stereotyping, girls and women continue to opt for conventional occupations. Their choice of courses at the school and college level is often dictated by their future roles as homemakers and nurturers, as a result of which fewer girls enrol into science, mathematics and technology. Despite rigid norms and mindsets established by the patriarchal norms, many girls and women are breaking shackles of illiteracy, suppression and

stereotypes, and emerging out of the socio-culturally determined patterns of employment. They are taking on roles that tradition has tried to deny them for long and are indeed making a mark in professions hitherto dominated by men.

But the number and visibility of such girls and women is an issue, which requires attention. From establishing solar energy systems in power-less villages to wielding AK 47s as commandos, from maneuvering houseboats to refereeing football matches, from playing the tabla and sarod to conducting development work in villages, from filling fuel in vehicles to driving a train, from heading India's largest bio-pharmaceutical company to conducting nikaahs, from flying fighter planes in the Kargil conflict to performing Hindu rites—women have dared to enter professions which has been denied to them. If we attempt to visualize a nuclear scientist, tabla player, a qazi, a black cat commando, a judge, a football referee, and a horse trainer we would inevitably visualize a male in such roles because most of us are socialized into believing so. How many of us have heard of names like Kamala Bai – barefoot solar engineer, Aarti Doctor – horse trainer, Sunita Chaudhary -auto-rickshaw driver, Bentla D Coth – referee of football matches, Mala Pal, China Pal and Kakoli Pal – idol makers and, Savitri Kabir Das – hand pump mechanic, Shabnam Qazi – India's first woman qazi, etc.

These invisible women have made a name for themselves in professions, which are considered unconventional for women simply because they are largely male-dominated. Their success stories have redefined the role women play in the development of society and nation at large. More importantly not all of them have had the privilege of a formal education system nor are they necessarily armed with degrees and doctorates. While for some women it was their economic situation which compelled them to opt for an unconventional

profession, for others to was the desire to take up challenging roles. These women symbolize the transformation that is taking place not only in metros but also in rural areas where women are challenging feudal notions of gender roles and discrimination based on caste and class.

### 10.3 OBJECTIVES

- To create awareness on success stories of those girls and women who have opted for unconventional professions.
- To examine the role of teachers in sensitizing girls.
- To realize the importance of role models as motivators.

#### Activity

- List five professions that are considered unconventional for women
- List five professions that you consider as conventional for women
- Identify five advertisements that reinforce gender stereotypes.

### 10.4 WOMEN WHO BROKE STEREOTYPES-SOME SUCCESS STORIES

Here are success stories of some women who have dared to break stereotypes and carve a niche for themselves in unconventional fields. Despite the prevalence of deep patriarchal societal norms these women decided to do things differently and not do



*Tessy Thomas—India's Agniputri*



Photo Source: <http://kalamfanclub.com/tessy-thomas-first-ever-woman-scientist-to-head-a-missile-project-in>

something that is different because we are conditioned into believing so.

Tessy Thomas is the first woman to head an Indian missile project, and has successfully broken the glass ceiling to make her mark in a profession considered a male bastion. She played a crucial role in India's missile development programme, particularly in the making of its long-range nuclear-capable ballistic missile, the Agni-V. The Thumba rocket launching station in Alapuzha in Kerala that was close to her house in Kerala was largely responsible for igniting an interest and curiosity in the world of missiles during childhood which only grew stronger. Encouraged by her mother, Tessy's interest in solid state physics took shape during her school days. Having done her post graduation in guided missile from Pune's Institute of Armament Technology she joined the DRDO in 1988. It was here that she worked under her revered role model,

APJ Abdul Kalam, who placed her in the Agni missile programme. An expert on solid propellant systems, Tessy's contributions were crucial in developing the Agni-V's multiple targetable re-entry vehicles. This was what helped the intercontinental ballistic missile withstand tremendous velocity and temperature of 3,000 degrees Celsius on re-entering the atmosphere. Thomas became project director for the Agni-IV missile project. In 2009, she went on to hold the post of Project Director for the 5,000 km-range Agni V missile.

#### **The Indian Woman Scientist's Association in 2008 stated**

*"We feel Tessy Thomas serves as a role model and an inspiration for women scientists to achieve their dreams and have their feet planted in both worlds"*

#### **Documentary**

Tejasvini: Interaction with Tessy Thomas, The Missile Women of India

DD News, October 9, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6l9tM3G2AGs>

#### **Solar Engineers—Kamala Bai, Gulabi, Neelam Kanwar And Ritma Bharti**



*Kamala Bai Rajasthan's first woman "barefoot solar engineer"*

Image Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2011/jun/24/india-barefoot-college-solar-power-training>

Kamala Bai is Rajasthan's first woman "barefoot solar engineer". She underwent a six month training course at a special community development project by the Social Work Research Centre (SWRC) at Tilonia in Rajasthan. For Kamala, the solar lanterns that were used to run the night schools in which she studied, led to curiosity and fascination. Driven with the urge to become a solar engineer Kamala surprisingly had the full-fledged support of her father-in-law while both her husband and mother-in-law wanted her to work in the fields like other women. She enrolled for the training course at Tilonia and eventually her other family members supported her.

Kamala has also become a role model for other village women who have stepped out of their homes to be trained as barefoot solar engineers. Like Kamala, Neelam Kanwar with the support of her husband enrolled for the six month course at Tilonia and is an expert at repairing solar lanterns in her own village. Gulabi 45, an illiterate mother of four from north-eastern India and sole bread-earner of her family is a successful pioneer in the Barefoot Solar Engineer Project who can make electronic circuits and chargers for solar lighting panels. Besides this, she is also an expert in installing and maintaining hand pumps, water tanks and pipelines.

In Bihar's west Champaran district, Ritma Bharti went all the way to Tilonia along with her husband and two year old child to undergo the six month solar training workshop. She prepared 80 solar lanterns at the workshop to carry them back to her village Bahurva where sunset implied darkness and the end of all economic activity as

there was no provision for electricity in her village. On her part, Ritma has trained many people in her village in the use and repair of these lanterns which are successfully being used to run schools, irrigation facilities, shops and medical centres.

The success stories of Kamala, Neelam, Gulabi and Ritma and many other women solar engineers from different states such as Rajasthan, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Sikkim has shattered the myth that women can only work in fields or at home, and that technology is accessible only to the literate and educated. These women engineers who are either illiterate or semi-literate have established solar energy systems in areas where electricity supply is either non-existent or highly erratic. The skill and expertise which they have acquired has not only empowered them but also liberated them from the drudgery of collecting fire wood and reduced health hazards of burning fire-wood. They have proved how, the use of solar energy provides a solution to education, agriculture, health and income generation, besides, cooking and lighting and finally for better quality of life and sustainable development.

### Documentary

24 Hours of Reality: Field Report-India's Barefoot College

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuqWucWSh-E>



Baoo Devi – Mithila Artist

Jitwarpura, a village in the Madhubani district in north Bihar has attained fame because it is home to three Mithila artists who have been awarded the Padma Shri for their contribution to the Mithila art form, and all three are women. Jagdamba Devi, Sita Devi and Baoa Devi are internationally acclaimed Mithila artists who have made Mithila painting famous not only in India but also across the world. While Jagdamba Devi started by painting the mud houses in her village particularly during marriages and other festivities, Sita Devi brought international recognition to Mithila painting when her works were exhibited in USA, Germany, France and Japan. A disciple of Jagdamba Devi, Baoa Devi started working at the age of 12 after her marriage. She began by drawing on paper and cloth, and then she began sketching and painting on canvas. She gives credit to her mother-in-law Gunja Devi for encouraging her to pursue her talent of Madhubani painting. Other than painting traditional designs in black and white as well as in colour she has diversified and added her own thoughts to her creations, such as the 9/11 terrorist attack in her canvas. Baoa Devi received the Padma Shri award in 2017 and holds the honour of exhibiting her artwork in several countries across the world. Her Madhubani painting was also gifted by PM Narendra Modi to the Mayor of Hannover, Stefan Schosstok.

### **Bengaluru's First and Only Woman Bus Driver-Prema Ramappa Nadapatti**

Prema quit her job as a nurse to become a bus driver with Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTc) in 2009, little knowing that she was so ahead of time, because in India driving a bus is commonly perceived as a masculine job. Hailing from Bhairnaddi in Belgaum Prema developed a passion for driving at a very young age and later turned her passion for driving into a full time job. In the beginning she learned to drive a lorry and got herself a heavy



*Prema Ramappa Nadapatti, behind the wheels of a BMTc bus in Bengaluru*

*Image Source-<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/meet-prema-ramappa-nadapatti-the-first-and-the-only-female-driver-of-bmtc/articleshow/46093486.cms>*

transport vehicle driving licence. Then she applied to the BMTc. Choosing to drive rather than work as a conductor, Prema dares to drive the Majestic-Jayanagar route, casting aside the common perception that women cannot be good drivers. After her husband's death in 2005, Prema did not lose hope. It was her mother, Gangamma, who stood by her like a pillar and persuaded Prema to follow her passion and apply for the driver's job. Prema believes that she is better than her male colleagues in terms of handling passengers, following all the safety procedures and traffic rules. She was appreciated and rewarded for her work ethic and dedication when she reported for duty while BMTc drivers went on a day-long strike in 2012.

### **Idol Makers of Kumartouli – Mala Pal, China Pal and Kakoli Pal**

*Kumartuli or Kumartouli in Kolkata has a long and rich tradition of clay idol-making and is famous for its strong association with the most important festival of Bengal – Durga Puja. The artists here have produced a number of iconic statues of gods and goddesses, the most popular important*

being that of goddess Durga and these idols are created by male artists. This is because this cottage industry continues to be a space designated for male artists. Women who belong to the families of these artisans are not encouraged to join the profession as they do not want an invasion of their space. But today Mala Pal, China Pal and Kakoli Pal have become the game changers. They have managed to break the monopoly of their male counterparts and carve a niche for themselves, paving the way for other women. Earlier there were no women artisans but today Kumartouli boasts of about ten women artisans, this is because the younger males are reluctant to enter the profession.



*Ardhanarishwar idol created by China Pal for the transgender community*

China Pal began to train under her father, noted idol maker Hemanta Pal a few years before his death in 1994. Known for her multi-tasking abilities she has earned the name Dashabhuj Ma (10-armed goddess) among fellow artisans. In her forties, she has a team of 12 people who work with cement, plaster, bronze and copper because public tastes are ever-evolving. According to her she has not fallen prey to capitalism; she treats her workers equally; when they finish their jobs they take a vacation together in the month of November. Her well known work is Ardhanarishwar idol of Shiva and Durga commissioned for Kolkata's first transgender Durga Puja pandal in 2015 for which she received the Rajyapal Puraskar.



*Mala Pal and her miniature idols*

Mala Pal is known for crafting miniature, 'foldable' Durga idols. In her late forties she took over the profession of making idols when her father died in 1985. As her elder brothers were not interested in the craft, Mala decided to carry the legacy forward. Despite going through a lot of financial hardship she did not lose hope and today she has received the recognition that was due to her. The Durga idols crafted by Mala are exported to Europe, Australia and Canada where the pujas are organised by the Bengali diaspora.

Other than Mala Pal and China Pal there are also other women who are an integral part of the Kumartouli potter's hub such as Kakoli Pal, Kanchi Pal and, Sharbani Pal who make idols, Parul Rael who makes jewellery for the Goddesses with sequins, *zardozi* beads and small mirrors; and Nivedita creates flowers out of pencil shavings. It takes about around two months to create a Durga 'family' and is priced at Rs.10,000 to Rs. 2 lakhs. China Pal, Kakoli Pal and Mala Pal were felicitated by P.C. Chandra Jewellers, Kolkata and a tribute was paid in the form of a five-minute documentary on them called *Kanya Rupeno* or *Daughters of Clay*.

### **Documentary**

*Kanya Rupeno (Daughters of Clay)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkusKWNqsGI>

## Scaling New Heights – Poorna Malavath



*Scaling New Heights–Poorna Malavath*

Image Source: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRljnFoCJwAqKVSUK9Qhg9C1e9nKUjCALCDoa2YO5xsZmvcCO3q>

### ***My Reason to Climb Mount Everest Was To Prove That Girls Can Do Anything***

In May 2014 history was created when Poorna Malavath, became the youngest female in the world to scale Mount Everest at the young age of thirteen. Born in a family of agricultural labourers from Nizamabad, Telangana, Poorna, studied in the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institution's Society (TSWREIS). She considers her good fortune that Praveen Kumar the secretary of TSWREIS saw the potential in her and became her mentor and guide. It was a rock climbing course in Summer Samurai at Bhongir in Nalgonda district which changed the course of her life. After completing the course along with Anand Kumar, Poorna and Anand Kumar along with 19 other students were selected for the 15 days course at the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling, after which they were given rigorous training at Ladakh at – 30 degree Celsius (30°C) to tackle the climatic conditions at the Everest. Poorna embarked on the historic expedition named *Operation Everest* along with Suresh Babu, an Arjuna awardee and Poorna's

trainer at Bhongir, Anand Kumar and a group of Sherpas. Fear of impending avalanches, very harsh mountain winds, the biting cold and the weight of heavy oxygen tanks did not dampen Poorna's courage. On 25<sup>th</sup> May 2014 they reached the summit of Everest at around 6 am. It was indeed a proud moment for her to hoist the national flag and stand on top of the world.

Poorna's achievements were felicitated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao gave her 25 lakhs cash gift, 5 acres of agricultural land, a 2 bedroom house and promised to provide necessary aid for her *education*. Poorna continued to scale new heights – she climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, and with co-climbers scaled Mt. Elbrus, the highest peak in Russia and in Europe. With this summit, Poorna completed three out of the Seven-Summits. Her goal is to summit the highest peaks of all the continents.

A biopic titled "Poorna" has been made by Rahul Bose who is the director and producer of the film. The role of Malavath Poorna in the movie is played by Aditi Inamdar (14-year-old) who is also from Telangana.

### **Film Poorna (2017)**

*Director*

Rahul Bose

### **First Woman Qazi-Shabnam Ara Begam-**

In 2003 Shabnam Ara Begam became India's first woman qazi, a profession exclusively reserved for men for Muslim men. Hailing from Nandigram, a village in West Bengal's east Midnapore district, Shabnam has conducted over 770 marriages. Having lost her mother at a very young age and the youngest among seven sisters, Shabnam used to assist her father Abdul Khadir Muhammad Jazlur Rehman (a quiz himself) in conducting nikaahs.

When he passed away in 2003, Shabnam applied for the post of qazi and in this endeavour she had the full support of her family. But Shabnam's appointment was challenged in the Kolkata High Court by Mozammel Hussain, a claimant to the qazi's post. He argued that the Shariat does not permit women to be qazis. In July 2005 the High Court referred the matter to Inspector General of Registration (Judiciary) and fortunately for Shabnam the verdict went in her favour as it was found that she was well-versed with Quran and the Hadis, and she was qualified to become a qazi. In her battle for justice Shabnam not only had the support of her family, community elders and maulvis and clerics of Nandigram also provided their support. Today, Shabnam is an expert in conducting nikaahs and moreover, being a woman qazi place her in an advantageous position because brides speaks to her more freely than they would to a male qazi.

Following Shabnam's footsteps, in a first of its kind in the state and breaking the stereotype, Qazi Jahan Ara and Qazi Afroz Begum, who hail from Jaipur have officially become Qazis in Rajasthan. They completed their two-year training from Mumbai-based Darul Uloom-i-Nisawan and were given certificates for their Qaziyat.

### Documentary

Breaking barriers: Woman qazi makes a difference, Published On: March 9, 2006  
<https://www.ndtv.com/video/zany/news/breaking-barriers-woman-qazi-makes-a-difference-1019>

### Activity

Identify at least three women in your village/ town/ city who have ventured into non-traditional roles.

Prepare a poster on each achiever highlighting their achievements and the struggles overcome by them.

## 10.5 TEACHERS AS MOTIVATORS

Teachers can play an important role in sensitising girls to opt for non-traditional jobs and reason out with them on the prospects of pursuing unconventional careers. A teacher can become an advocate for her students and facilitate the elimination of barriers in the school that stop them from fulfilling their desires. Encouragement and support are two important tools, which a teacher can use to become an advocate for his/her female students and help them fulfil their dreams. Teachers can play an effective role to tackle feelings of low self-esteem and confidence among girls, by mentoring young girls as regards their role in development of society. Teachers can no doubt expose students to achievements of successful women in the public and political sphere but at the same time they should also strive to be role models for students. They should not forget that they themselves need to set examples through their behavioural patterns. It is also equally important to create awareness and develop gender sensitivity amongst male teachers so that male teachers are better able to undo their own their pre-conceived notions of socially-constructed gender roles, attitudes and behaviours. This will enable them to demonstrate to both male and female students about the equal roles men and women play in nation building.

## 10.6 INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT OF NON-TRADITIONAL JOBS

Non-traditional jobs are those occupations for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25% of the individuals employed in an occupation. And non-traditional jobs for women are any occupations in which 75% or more of those employed are men, that is, these are jobs in which women comprise less than 25% of the workforce. Some of the jobs which are considered unconventional for women in India are scientist, hand pump mechanic, solar engineer, football

referee, fire service officer, bus driver, priest, sarpanch etc. Students may be asked to investigate both conventional and unconventional jobs that are pursued by women. They may be encouraged to locate if there is a girl or woman who is involved in an unconventional profession in his/her locality and then report her findings to the class. Debates could be organised in class as regards the impact of involvement of women in unconventional jobs and also that of men in unconventional jobs. Project work may be given to investigate an unconventional occupation for which they can use the internet, reference books, newspaper, magazines, etc. They could also prepare a poster display of the occupation they are investigating.

### 10.7 REVIEWING EXISTING MATERIAL ON CAREER GUIDANCE

Very often students are exposed to career options they may want to consider, through print or media, which they see at school and home. Given their socialisation and mindset, most girls may not picture themselves working in unconventional careers and need constant exposure to materials in which someone that “looks like them” is involved. It is therefore, necessary to try and locate material, which may motivate girls to opt for unconventional jobs. One could identify such materials such as brochures, displays and websites that show the changing roles of women and families and portray a variety of careers. Both boys and girls to be encouraged to review print and non-print material such as advertisements and serials that reinforce biases and stereotyping, i.e. which portray women in their traditional roles. They may be asked to analyse the impact of such material.

#### Activity

Identify three advertisements which reinforce stereotypical roles for women, mention the role assigned in each advertisement and elaborate as to why you consider it stereotypical.

S.No.	Name of Advertisement	Role Assigned	Comments
1.			
2.			
3.			

#### Activity

Identify three advertisements which have accorded progressive roles for women, mention the role assigned in each advertisement and elaborate as to why you consider it progressive.

S.No.	Name of Advertisement	Role Assigned	Comments
1.			
2.			
3.			

### 10.8 ENGAGING AND EDUCATING PARENTS

It is a known fact that parents play a crucial role as career counsellors with their children and therefore, it is important to educate them about their role and expectations. Parents' own stereotypes and biases can influence their children's career and therefore may not support a choice, which is unconventional. Very often courses opted by girls are directed by parental expectations of girls' future roles as mothers and nurturers. A teacher can play an important role in educating and exposing parents to the variety of career option available to girls. While educating parents it is extremely important to keep in mind the diverse socio-cultural background of parents. With the encouragement of school authorities and support of students, a career development programme may be organised for parents, which will expose them to variety of unconventional jobs that are available for girls. Teachers can reason out with parents rationally but patiently as to how with their guidance and support girls

can excel in almost any field/occupation and which will also bring about a qualitative change in their lives. Through print and non-print material teachers can expose parents to achievement and contribution of those women who have made a mark in unconventional professions. Parents may be encouraged to collaborate with teachers to keep their daughters challenged and energized. Teachers can suggest activities to be developed by parents to support their daughters' career interests regardless of the field they are interested in.

### Activity

**Prepare a Career Questionnaire for parents of girls and boys and elicit their response. This will give you an idea of parental perception of career aspirations for girls and boys. Some of the questions are listed below.**

Which jobs /carers do you think are most appropriate for girls?

Which jobs /carers do you think are most appropriate for boys?

What are the reasons that some jobs are deemed most appropriate for women?

What are the reasons which stop girls from considering careers that are appropriate for men?

Would you encourage your daughter to consider such careers?

Would you encourage your son to consider a job that is considered most appropriate for women? Why?

## 10.9 SUCCESSFUL ROLE MODEL STRATEGIES

A role model is someone who inspires, a person whom we admire and aspire to be like. The saying "seeing is believing" holds true. Girls will begin to believe that they have many options, if they come across individuals like them who are successful in unconventional careers. It is extremely important to bring students and role models together in many ways. With the improvement in technology,

contact between role models and students can be made through teleconferencing, medium of radio, etc. Presentations by successful female achievers can be an effective way of motivating girls to consider unconventional careers. Students can be encouraged to identify women from their family, community or neighbourhood who are pursuing unconventional careers, and invite them to share their experience with students. Each girl in the class can be asked to identify her role model (in a non-traditional profession) and also enumerate reasons as to why she has chosen so.

### Activity

Identify a girl or a woman who is pursuing an unconventional profession and whom you consider a role model.

Answer the following questions:

1. Why do you consider her a role model?
2. Would you choose a non-conventional career? Why?
3. What is it that inspires you most about your role model?

## 10.10 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

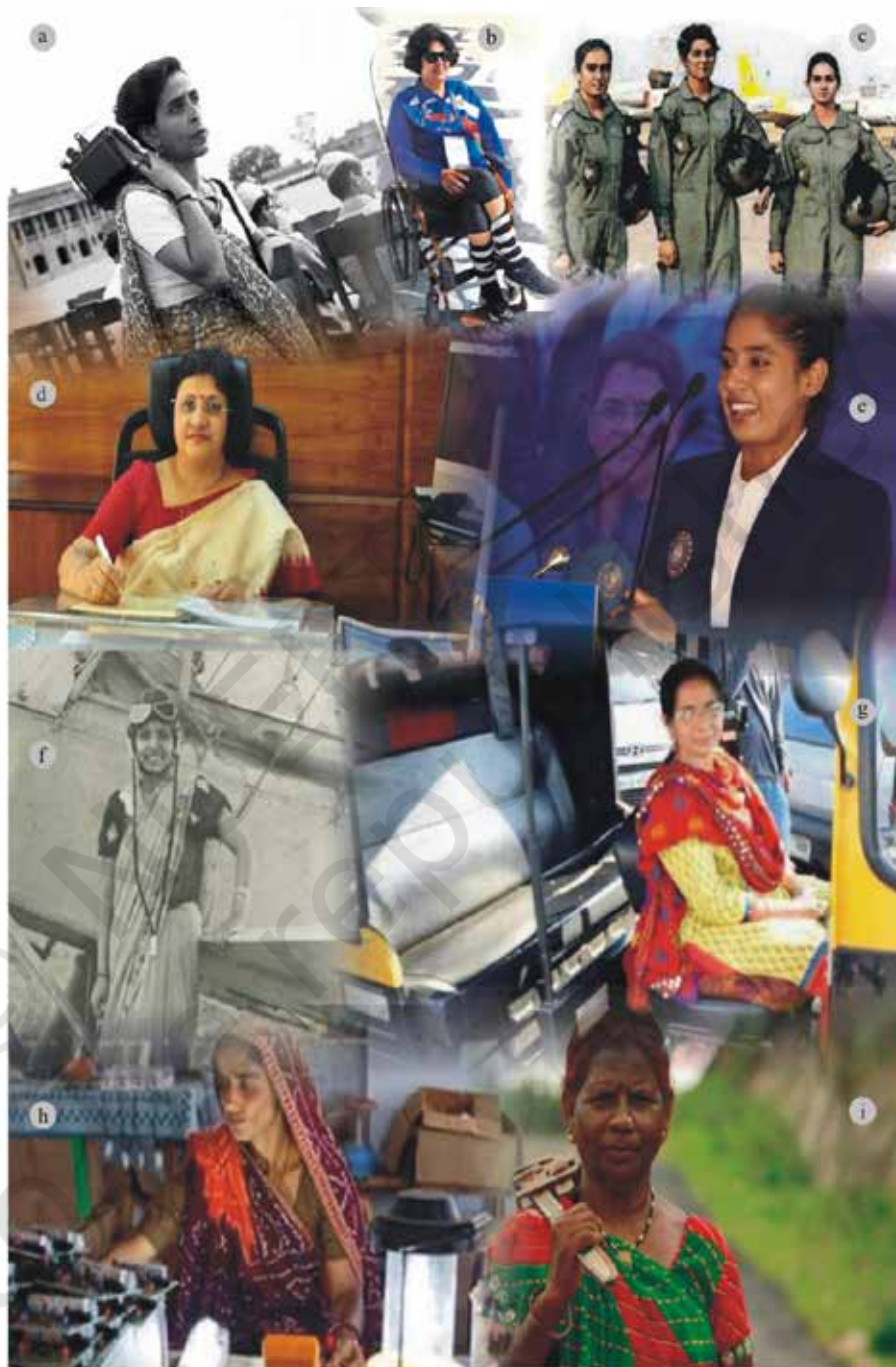
Girls will benefit the most when they are provided with comprehensive development guidance and counselling programme to assist them through their courses and programmes, career development, self-confidence to opt for subject/courses that are unconventional, etc. Students can be exposed to a wide range of careers options, including those, which are unconventional. They can be assisted in helping them to determine skills and interests which they possess and which will help them to pursue unconventional jobs. It is important to provide individual and group counselling to strengthen skill and confidence, particularly where a culture of gender bias threatens to discourage girls who want to opt for a non-traditional career. Students may be given exercises to set goals for their future. Efforts should also be made to reduce

fears regarding subjects like mathematics, science and computers. They may be exposed to a variety of vocational courses that are available in other schools and institutes. Discussion regarding pressures from family, peers and community to conform to stereotypical gender roles may be encouraged. Those students who are interested in non-traditional careers may be provided opportunities to evolve strategies on how to succeed in an occupation dominated by the other gender. i.e. peer support.

### 10.11 CONCLUSION

Success stories of a number of invisible women may not seem familiar to many but they are living examples of those girls and women who have actually dared to walk the unconventional path. There are many more such women whose achievements have not acquired the visibility and recognition, which they actually deserve. There is a need to create awareness amongst both girls and boys that girls and women can also be adequately equipped to take up challenging roles for which family, the school and community at large have important roles to play.

### 10.12 OTHER INVISIBLE WOMEN



(a) Homai Vyarawalla, Photojournalist (1913–2012); (b) Deepa Malik, First Indian Woman to win a medal at the Paralympic Games in 216; (c) IAF Women Fighter Pilots Bhawana Kanth, Avani Chaturvedi, Mohana Singh; (d) Arundhati Bhattacharya, Chairman, State Bank of India; (e) Mithali Raj, Indian Cricketer; (f) Sarla Thakral, First Woman Pilot; (g) Shila Dawre, Auto Driver; (h) Santosh Devi, Solar Engineer; (i) Meerabai Meena, Handpump Mechanic in Rajasthan

### 10.13 REFERENCES

- National Curriculum Framework (2005). NCERT, New Delhi
- Thapar Charu, Gender Diversity In India: Helping Women Lean Into The Workplace, *Financial Express*, March 2, 2017.
- Rout Usha Rani, Lewis Sue and Kagan Carolyn, Work and Family Roles: Indian Career Women in India and the West, *Indian Journal Of Gender Studies*, (6:1)1999, Sage Publications, New Delhi.
- Jain Gunjan, she Walks She Leads Women who Inspire India (2016). Penguin, India.
- Jagadeesh Vinayashree, Breaking Stereotypes On Road, *The Hindu*, Bangalore:, March 07, 2014
- Sanchari Pal, In Love With Rocket Science: The Story of Tessy Thomas, India's Missile Woman. November 30, 2017
- <https://www.thebetterindia.com/122711/missile-woman-agniputri-tessy-thomas-drdo-kerala-india/>
- Shushmita Chakraborty, Fair Response Upsets Baoa, *The Telegraph*, Tuesday, February 7, 2017
- <http://www.dailypioneer.com/nation/jitwarpur-a-village-of-padma-shri-decorated-shrimatis.html>
- Manoj Kumar R. Prema Ramappa Nadapatti: Bengaluru's First And Only Woman Bus Driver, March 07, 2016
- <http://www.theweek.in/features/society/prema-ramappa-nadapatti-bengaluru-first-only-woman-bus-driver.html>
- Hemchhaya De, A Tale Of 4 Kumortuli Women Idol Makers, October 7, 2016 :
- <https://www.femina.in/achievers/a-tale-of-4-kumortuli-women-idol-makers-25024.html>
- Shoma Chatterji, Breaking the male bastion of Kumartuli
- <http://www.indiatogether.org/breaking-the-male-bastion-of-kumartuli-women>
- Shreya Das, Women In A Man's World: Two Female Sculptors In The Art Of Making The Goddess Durga, Kolkata Updated: October 5, 2016 11:57
- <http://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/art-and-culture/durga-puja-women-sculptors-artist-of-kumortuli-kolkata-bengal-idol-making-hub-3060284/>
- Jahanavi, Breaking The Stereotype: Rajasthan Gets Its First Female Qazis, Feb.2016
- <http://topyaps.com/rajasthan-female-qazi>
- Jaideep Mazumdar, Shabnam Ara Begum, *Outlook, The Magazine* , August 2005
- <https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/shabnam-qazi/228205>

### Concerns of Adolescent Girls

- Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
- Maladjustment
- Identity crisis
- Lack of concentration in studies
- Physical appearance
  - Pimples
  - Height
  - Size of breasts
- Body image
- Sexual attractiveness
- Heterosexual attraction
- Heightened emotionality
- Lack of self confidence
- Feelings of personal inadequacy
- Pre-occupation with sex
- Extreme modesty
- Day dreaming
- Moodiness
- Obstinacy
- Heightened sensitivity resulting in easily hurt feelings
- Unsatisfactory relationship with teachers
- Worry about examination
- Fear of results of tests and examinations
- Lack of concentration
- Unrealistic teacher expectations
- Too much homework
- Inability to express themselves, to say no
- Lack of freedom
- Problems in decision-making
- Need to be on one's best behaviour
- Unsatisfactory relationships with fathers
- Poor communications with parents
- Unrealistic parental expectations
- Difference of opinion with parents

# Meaning of Each Life Skill

- 1. Self-Awareness:** Includes our recognition of ourselves, our character, strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes. It is learning about me as a special person. It is a pre-requisite for effective communication, interpersonal relationship and developing empathy.
- 2. Empathy:** Is an ability to imagine what life is like for another person even in a situation that we may not be familiar with. It helps us to understand and accept others and their behaviour that may be very different from ourselves i.e. understanding how people are alike and how we differ. It includes skills like - Ability to listen, understand another's needs and circumstances, ability to express that understanding.
- 3. Critical Thinking:** It is the ability to analyze information and experience in an objective manner. This include skills like - analyzing peer and media influences, analyzing attitudes, values, social norms, beliefs, and factors affecting them, identifying relevant information and sources of information.
- 4. Creative Thinking:** It is an ability that helps us look beyond our direct experience and address issues in a perspective which is different from the obvious or the norm. It adds novelty and flexibility to the situation of our daily life. It is the ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. It contributes to problem solving and decision making by enabling us to explore available alternatives and various consequences of our action or non-action.
- 5. Decision-Making:** The process of making assessment of an issue by considering all possible/ available options and the effects different decision might have on them. It is the ability to weigh the pros and cons of alternative and accepting responsibility for the consequences of the decision.
- 6. Problem Solving:** Having made decisions about each of the options, choosing the one which is the best suited, following it through the process again till a positive outcome of the problem is achieved. In all it is identifying problems, exploring alternatives and making rational decision. For developing these skills one needs to have - Information-gathering skills, evaluating future consequences of present actions for self and others and determining alternative solutions to problems.
- 7. Effective Communication:** It is an ability to express ourselves both verbally and non-verbally in an appropriate manner. This means being able to express desires, opinions, and fears and seek assistance and advice in times of need. Skills include - Verbal/non-verbal communication, active listening, expressing feelings, giving feedback without blaming, receiving feedback.
- 8. Interpersonal Relationship:** It is a skill that helps us to understand our relations with others and relate in a positive/reciprocal manner with them. It helps us to value and maintain relationship with friends and family members and also be able to end relationships constructively. It helps in working with others and understanding roles and constraints of others.
- 9. Coping with Stress:** It is an ability to recognize the source of stress in our lives, its effect on us and acting in ways that help to control our levels of stress. This may involve identifying stress, time management, positive thinking and taking action to reduce some stress for example changes in physical environment, life styles, learning to relax etc. we need to go into the details of this skill as this is the important skill to be developed in children of the present world. Through questions and answers debates, discussions and role play teacher can share happy

moments, share unhappy moments, analyse and understand the causes of stress and strategies for coping with it. The art of stress management is to keep oneself at a level of stimulation that is healthy and enjoyable. Learning to cope with stress will give students greater control over their lives and help them to keep their stress level low.

- 10. Coping with Emotions:** It is the ability, which involves recognizing emotions in others, and ourselves, being aware of how emotions influence behaviours and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. It helps to understand that there are a range of emotions and the expression of emotions may be different for different people in response to the same situation. It may include managing anger, dealing with grief and anxiety, coping with loss, abuse and trauma.
- 11. Household Related Skills:** Household related skills are skills needed to carry out our day to day activities in the house. It includes skills like cooking, balanced diet, washing clothes, sweeping and cleaning, kitchen gardening, health and hygiene, mending, stitching, thrift and household remedies. Domestic maintenance like minor electrical repair, repair of taps, bicycle maintenance, white washing, painting, maintenance of domestic appliances like stoves and cookers are also included in it.
- 12. Family Related Skills:** These are skills that are related to management of all the family affairs. All the family related skills such as planned and responsible parenthood, AIDS/HIV/STD awareness, drug abuse, sex education, menstrual management, handling and stopping family violence, verbal and physical abuse, child abuse, sexual harassment, first aid (burn, injuries, snake bite drowning, poisoning etc.) home nursing, health and nutrition are included in it.
- 13. Accessing Public Services :** These skills relate to knowing and understanding of accessing and operating the existing public services for day to day functioning of life thus benefiting the family, the community and the society for improving the quality of life. It includes skills like post and telegraph operations, rail/bus services, banking operations, accessing health and sanitation service, traffic rules and regulation and computer literacy including internet ticket booking.
- 14. Environmental Sensitivity:** It relates to protection, conservation and preservation of environment, understanding the close relationship between human beings, their activities and the surrounding in which they live. The environment related skills are like protection of environment, identification of pollution hazards and polluting agents, conservation of resources, recycling of bio-degradable materials for daily use, love and care for plants and animals, use of eco-friendly techniques and disaster management (floods, famine, earthquake, cyclone etc.)
- 15. Legal Literacy:** It is important that children are made aware about laws that govern human life. These laws are essential to combat conflicts arising out of continuing deep-seated inequalities of caste, class, race, religion and above all gender inequalities. It is important to build in our children enough understanding and commitment to human progress through the content and process of school education. The key to all human developments lies in ensuring observance of laws and not enforcement by external agencies. This includes skills related to constitutional rights and duties, right to education, consumer education, human rights, rights of the child, right of women, personal and social laws, labour laws, laws related to crime against women and public interest litigation.

## Notes

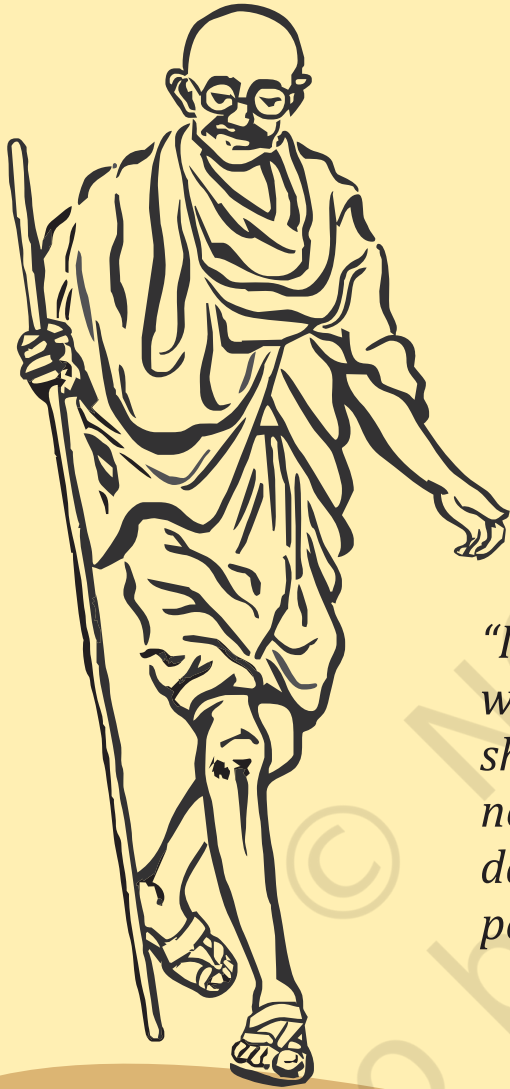
© NCERT  
not to be republished

## Notes

© NCERT  
not to be republished

## Notes

© NCERT  
not to be republished



*“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

## Volume I : Perspectives on Gender and Society

### Modules

Sex and Gender

Indicators of Gender Equality and Empowerment

Gender Budgeting

Gender, Media and Education

Gender and Violence

Gender, Science and Technology

## Volume II : Gender and Schooling Processes

### Modules

Textbooks, Pedagogy and Gender Concerns

Language and Gender

पाठ्येतर सामग्री और जेंडर संवेदनशीलता

Creating Gender Friendly Classrooms

Mental Health of Adolescent Girls: Concepts, Concerns and Strategies

Teacher as a Counsellor

Life Skills Education in Schools

Development of Leadership Qualities in Girls

Nurturing Sports and Physical Education in Girls and Women

## Volume III : Gender and Women's Empowerment

### Modules

Women's Movements in India: Tracing the Journey

From Parity to Equity in Girls' Education: Lessons from South Asia

Education of Minority Communities: The Case of Muslim Girls

Economic Empowerment of Women: Potential and Possibilities

Employment and Empowerment of Women Through Self Help Groups

Protecting the Rights of Girls and Women: The Legal Framework

13100

विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



एन सी ई आर टी

NCERT

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

ISBN 978-93-5007-261-5