

**REPORT  
OF  
EXPERT COMMITTEE  
ON  
GENDER AND EDUCATION**

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## PREFACE

Deeply concerned with rising trends of social intolerance, and more particularly crimes against women, the National Commission for Women felt the need to set up an Expert Committee on Gender & Education. Undoubtedly efforts are being made to address the situation by the Government by formulating more legislation for the protection of women. However, simultaneously there is a growing realization that there is an imperative need to change the stereotyped mindset, specially of men and the community at large, which can only be done by purposeful and effective gender sensitization. It is increasingly being felt that the long-term solution lies in imparting gender sensitive values through education, since education is of prime significance in the communication of that which is central to the transformation of the human mind. Questions have been raised of the basic postulates of the educational structure and its various systems in India, with the conclusion that the existing models have failed and there is total lack of relevance between the human being and the complex contemporary society. **Today's modern technology driven India requires the creation of a new culture - values of democracy, respect for human rights and equality.**

To this end, it is important to mainstream gender sensitisation/ human rights education in schools and universities, introducing a gender sensitisation/human rights element into every subject from the primary level. It is vital for a student to realise that while academically proficiency is important, simultaneously he must have the capacity to look at a woman without negative sexual thoughts, or at a person from another or vulnerable caste with compassion; and treat all human beings as equal. We teach our children the intricate complexities of mathematics and science but fail to impart to them fundamental tenets of male and female interaction. Character building of adolescent boys and change in their mind set, must be implemented without delay. This process must start at a very tender age, not when the child is older and formed views.

It is said that the family is the first school for it is within the family where children are raised and formed as human beings. Undoubtedly, with India being a vast, heterogenous country in terms of geography, culture and economic disparities, there are bound to be differences.

**Society breeds distorted values of religion and caste, class distinctions, sense of the inferior and superior...**

But in the Indian scenario it is seen that the society breeds distorted values of religion and caste, class distinctions, sense of the inferior and superior. Negative forces like religious dogma, superstition, reactionary forces and regressive patriarchy prevail. Thus parental responsibility in educating children on constitutional and human rights principles of equality becomes all the more difficult and requires the help of civil society and educational institutions. Hence all the more reason that these values be inculcated as part of syllabus in school.

The issue of Education as Catalyst in Gender & Caste Sensitisation was also discussed at the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) meeting held on 7th February, 2012, in which I participated on behalf of Chairperson. The NHRC of India is an autonomous public body given a statutory basis by the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 and responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights, defined by the Act, with Chairperson National Commission for Women being an ex officio member. In the meeting I narrated my experiences in interior/rural areas as Chairperson of Inquiry Committee to investigate cases of atrocities against women, wherein it consistently emerged that there still exists a gender and caste bias in the minds of the people. It is not only a gender issues but a human rights issue of which both women and men are victims, and both have a stake in the struggle for gender equality. Once again in the meeting it was suggested that the long-term solution, lies in education and it is vital that citizens, especially young children in the age group of 6-16 years be imparted human rights education to ensure that they grow up into responsible and sensitive adults. The benefits of education are not only economic, but also empower an individual to achieve basic human rights, including being sensitive to the rights of others.

Hence the present Report is in the form of a policy paper on with the CHALLENGE on how to address the issue.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND MANDATE OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE

In mid June 2012, an Expert Committee was Constituted under Para 8 of the National Commission for Women Act, 1990 comprising of a panel of experts from different disciplines and varied expertise, to deliberate and recommend valuable suggestions for re-orienting/ re-strategizing the education system in India for a multi layered, multi-dimensional transformation in the mindset of the society towards equality and equity viz-a-viz Gender.

**The Objective of the Expert Committee was :**

- a) To Recognize the role of education as a catalyst in gender sensitization;
- b) To main stream gender sensitization/ human rights education in schools and universities;
- c) To introduce gender sensitization/ human rights element into every subject;
- d) To bring drop outs within the safety net in a institutionalized manner;
- e) To create awareness about the law and police in a child friendly way; and
- f) To make suggestions and recommendations to initiate policy level changes; as well as for better implementation of existing policies, programmes and schemes for welfare of women and children in the field of education;

The Expert Committee formally conducted deliberations by meeting several times; and, the members constantly interacted with ideas and suggestions and exchanged views through different medium including using internet and email, in addition to meeting physically. The same have been compiled in the form of the present report.

I always believe that I have stood on the shoulders of giants. The National Commission for Women was set up as statutory body in January 1992, and since it's inception tremendous amount of work and research has been done on various topics related to women. The present report is based on the experience sharing and the references

The focus of the report is not on increasing literacy, but on bringing attitudinal change in all stakeholders.

drawn from previous publications present in NCW and also on valuable inputs received from NCERT, UGC, C.B.S.E, members of civil society, students etc. duly accepted by the Expert Committee.

Taking note of the increased reporting of crimes against women from all over the country lately, the Committee believed in the urgency to take action NOW, to address moral, social, ethical decline in the society. It was also realized that *an inter-sectoral, cross-sectional, multi-dimensional intervention at all levels of education system as well as societal awakening is the need of the hour.*

Though the mandate of the committee was wide and comprehensive, the primary focus in the present report is on recognizing the need for gender sensitization and instilling moral, values or modeling of character of every individual from childhood, by inculcating righteousness of conduct and sense of duty towards all. The focus of the report is not on increasing literacy, but on bringing attitudinal change, in all stakeholders.

**The committee has recognized that there are three distinct aspects of education from gender perspective which needs to be addressed-**

- i. the aspect of understanding gender education and its outreach and means/methods of sensitization and spreading awareness regarding gender rights, equity and equality as enshrined in the Constitution, to all.
- ii. Secondly, education as a means to building moral value based education system that inculcates right ethics and morals based on righteousness of conduct and sense of responsibility of every action.
- iii. Finally, educating and sensitizing Policy makers (legislators), Implementing agencies (Executive/Police), Adjudicators, Media and other stakeholders in order to ensure every women /girl in the country gets her due.

## CHAPTER 2

### BACKGROUND

*Recognizing the role of education as a catalyst in gender sensitization and as an enabling agent for empowerment of Women.*

In recent times, there has been widespread debate on how education is the most effective means in impacting and re-orienting gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles; and on its role in changing traditional mindset in society. The education system today promotes a linear assembly line mindset, while recent advances in technology make it imperative to encourage a different non-linear mindset among young people breaking across all economic groups.

Education certainly has the potential to play a key role in gender formation and change. Gender is a socially constructed and intersectional identity: it always intersects with social class, ethnicity and religion, culture, disability, sexuality, age etc. Education itself offers real opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes.

*"Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process."*

*–ICPD Programme of Action, paragraph 4.2*

*Education has the potential to contribute to alternative socialization, challenging conventional gender ideologies, levelling the playing field between males and females in relation to skills, credentials and qualification, and allowing women the use of knowledge to empower themselves in diverse ways. For example, a study in Calcutta has shown the positive impact that education has on the ability of women to resist and resolve situations of domestic violence (Sen., 1999).*

Students in private schools do better than those in govt. schools possibly not only because of facilities available but socio-economic background at home which supports them.

#### A. CONSTRAINTS TO EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA

India accounts for 30% of the world's total illiterate population and out of which 70% are women. As per 2011 Census data, women constitute 48% of the total population in India, with a total literacy rate of 53.7% as compared to 75.3% in males. The literacy rate among rural women is 46.1% as compared to 72.9% among urban women; which is still lower than literacy rates among rural and urban men which stands at 70.7% and 86.3% respectively.

Some of the broad constraints in educating a female are enumerated below-

##### ***(i) Access and retention in education -***

Problems of gender disparity and discrimination begin with access to schooling. Access and retention problems deepen at higher levels of education with the GPI at lower secondary and upper secondary levels dropping to 0.73 and 0.67 respectively (UNESCO, 2004). Insufficient attention is being given to social and cultural barriers which prevent girls and women from entering the education system. Issues like long distances to school, poor sanitation facilities, poverty (because of paucity of money, parents prefer to educate boys than girls) etc. impact access to education.

##### ***(ii) Traditional Patriarchal Mindset and discrimination-***

Even as the thresholds of schooling completion increase, with significantly narrowing gender gaps in primary education in particular, discrimination against girls at all stages ie primary, secondary and higher education remains an issue. Economic and social privilege also affect gendered patterns of access, with girls in secondary and higher education predominantly drawn from higher income and social groups, endowed with higher social status. Students in private schools do better than those in government schools possibly not

only because of the facilities available but socio-economic background at home which supports them. Reasons for parental under-investment in female education are diverse and well-known (see Subrahmanian, 2005).

***(iii)Undervaluation of female labour and stereotyping -***

The deeply embedded undervaluation of female labour, identified primarily with the reproductive or household sphere, underlies the belief in many communities that educating females bring low returns, as skills required in the reproductive sphere require domestic socialization and not many years of schooling. The gender division of labour continues to reward women less in the workplace (Kingdom, 1998b). This has resulted in relatively lower female education and work participation reflecting the ideological bias against considering women as household bread-winners. Low valuation of female labour in the market place and association of female labour with fulfilling domestic responsibilities including child rearing has led to a deep-seated cultural association of women with the institutions of marriage and family. Jha and Jhingran's (2002) detailed study of schooling in communities across 10 districts of India shows the continued belief in the importance of marriage for girls at an early age, and of maintaining asymmetries between men and women in educational attainment as a marker of relatively greater male social status.

While gender inequalities intensify with poverty, caste inequalities and geographical location (particularly in underdeveloped rural areas), particular gender-differentiated ideologies cut across all social groups, explaining why in all social groups, girls lag behind boys in access to and participation in education. These include specific views on the appropriate roles to be played by women in family and society, and the underlying controls placed on female mobility and chastity. These gender-specific ideologies are responsible for the continued wide gaps in female secondary schooling enrolment.

***(iv)Sexual harassment and violence-***

It is the major constraining factor preventing parents from freely sending their girls to school. Public spaces in India continue to be relatively hostile to the presence of women, and rarely function in a way to make women feel secure and confident. Transporting girls to school and back safely, especially where secondary schools and

**Sexual harassment and violence is the major constraining factor preventing parents from freely sending their girls to school.**

universities are far away from their homes, is a critical policy measure that has received scant attention. Similarly, while initiatives to teach girls self defence or cycling have been widely hailed as critical components of gender-sensitive education, they have not really been taken up and promoted widely through the education system.

***(v) Reinforcement of gender roles-***

Ideologies that shape female and male identities in Indian society are mutually reinforcing across institutions, such as the family, workplace, schools and community (Kabeer and Subrahmanian, 1999) leading to vicious cycles of under-investment in females. Female education has suffered as a result of this, though it is well-known that breaking the cycle of multiple deprivations can be significantly furthered through ensuring quality education for girls and boys.

***(vi) Reinforcement of gender discrimination in the present education system -***

In the process of both socialisation and education, it is the educational institutions that play a central role. For instance, stereotypes pertaining to responsibilities, roles and opportunities, to which children are initially exposed in family settings, are endorsed in educational institutions. So schools are places where the socialising process is reinforced and given legitimacy and authenticity. The social knowledge relating to gender is constructed, validated and perpetuated by schools through textbooks, pedagogy skills, assessment and the academic milieu.

A considerable amount of research has been done on textbooks that represent female characters as weak, dependent and stereotypically shy, and confined to the home where as the male characters are shown as strong, independent, innovative, outgoing and responsible for the outer world.



Educational institutions have been engaged in perpetuating the existing social structures of power through the construction and legitimisation of a skewed view of women. Even female students are led to internalise gender-biased views in schools. Thus education, meant to empower, is performing the opposite function. In order for State players to show their seriousness on gender issues, it is imperative to revisit some popular stereotypes about women. For this, social institutions in general and schools in particular play an important role. The need of the hour is a thorough review of textbooks, pedagogy skills, an assessment system and the school milieu, and address areas where improvement is needed.

The drop-out rates in comparison to boys is higher due to a number of reasons, interalia which include:

- Negative attitudes- Parents, teachers and the community do not favour girls' education. They give preference to boys being educated rather than girls.
- Gender bias in teaching/learning materials.
- Poor curricula, Inadequate text books, untrained teachers, badly managed programs.
- Girls have low confidence levels and a lower self-esteem which inhibits them.
- Medical conditions /HIV/AIDS - Often girls and not boys leave school to look after sick parents.
- Except for some states, scholarship facilities for girls are inadequate.

#### **B. CONSTRAINTS IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUITY - EQUALITY & JUSTICE DUE TO EXISTING MINDSET IN ALL SPHERES**

Recently in India reports of crime against women has increased manifold. The increase in crimes and violence against women reflects the moral degeneration in the society and what is distressing is to see the increase in the gravity and nature of the violence. More often than not it is found that the custodians of law, law makers, implementers, adjudicators, media etc. themselves give in to traditional /patriarchal thinking thus causing more damage.

The lack of sensitization and awareness to gender rights and law

**Because patriarchal mindsets sanction violence against women which women themselves have internalized into accepting their subordinate status.**

hampers the responses and action of persons in position of authority to act impartially without discriminating on the basis of gender. Most often than not elected representatives of the people are seen blaming the female survivor/victim for the violence, making her the guilty party instead of indicting the perpetrator of the violence. Even on the part of the police, there have been many reported cases of inaction of police in sexual assault of a female. The issue of prevention of any discrimination and violence against women, and punitive action after any incidence are different and hence the approaches have to be different in both.

### **C. SOME CONSTRAINTS IN THE SOCIO-POLITICAL SYSTEM -**

#### ***(i) Family /Parents***

It is essential to scrutinize the family structure that fails to provide adequate security to the girl child considering the fact that India is home to 430 million children. Often said that the family is the first school for it is within the family where children are raised and formed as human beings. India has been referred to as unity in diversity but an intolerant society which seems to be regressing stands in the way of the family promoting constitutional values of freedom and equality; buttressed by distorted values of religion and caste. The mother is supposed to be the fulcrum of the family, but in India a number of mothers are poor, uneducated and insufficiently trained. They often end up in the daily struggle of managing an ill equipped family, too many household and reproductive duties, limited mobility, insecurity and societal backwardness and hence not in a position to propel out themselves of the oppressive conditions. Further women tend to look at themselves through male gaze, that is the reason why they are active participants in female foeticide and dowry harassment etc. It is because patriarchal mindsets sanction violence against women,

which women themselves have internalized into accepting as their subordinate status.

- The family is also the place where gender roles are initiated and built upon. Our vast, heterogeneous country with different socio-economic-cultural-religious moorings augments the same. Unfortunately negative religious beliefs & cultural mindsets are reinforced in families, irrespective of class, including gender bias.
- Dowry, incest, sex-selection, domestic violence and gender based violence takes place in families; **cutting across class and caste**. The fact that violence taking place within four walls of home ie within the private sphere, hence the task of sensitizing each parent is itself a challenge. Parents and peers play crucial role in determining the access to education, framing subject preference and career choices.

***(ii) People's elected representatives at all levels, leaders, politicians etc.***

Elected representatives of the people are supposed to act as role models, but in India they are infamous for making sexist comments. Lack of political participation among women adds to the woes. It has been seen that male candidates are often better equipped than female candidates. They are richer and have better networks to support them. That makes it more difficult for women to be in politics. They even generally get less support from their own parties in comparison to men. This condition is exuberated by the gender identity in the mind of the citizens (both women and men) that men are better leaders than women. So if a woman contest elections in the same electoral district as a man, the chance for the male candidate is higher.

How can a nation be described as democratic if women do not participate as much as men? Is the parliament representative of the nation if despite women comprising half the population have a meager representation in the Parliament and state assemblies. Gender equality in politics will result in the empowerment of women, their political voice will help women to not only fight abuse and discrimination, but also change male mindsets which have for years kept them subservient. Towards this goal reservation of seats in

**Police officials and other law enforcement agencies misunderstand the concept of Gender. There is therefore an urgent need to sensitise personnel.**

panchayats and municipalities is undoubtedly, bringing about a silent revolution.

### ***(iii) Police Personnel and Gender Sensitization***

Majority of the police officials and other members of the law enforcement agencies sometimes misunderstand the concept of Gender. There is therefore an urgent need to sensitise personnel for social change due to the following reasons interalia:

- The concept of gender is misunderstood by a large majority of police officers.
- Cult of masculinity prevailing in the police organisation which does not easily permit a change in the attitude and behaviour of male police officers towards women.
- Delays in the investigation of cases.
- The perfunctory nature of investigation and delay in disposal of cases relating to violence against women.
- Increasing cases of violence against women.

### ***(iv) Administration/Employment Sector***

Gender issues in the employment sector need critical analysis. In India constitutional provisions guarantee equality between men and women and prohibit any discrimination on the basis of sex or other considerations in the recruitment and promotion of public personnel. Yet constraints prevail preventing women from fully enjoying their constitutional rights and guarantees. Hence the need to sensitise and make employers responsive to needs and concerns of women, specially marginalized women ie dalit women and those from minority communities.

### *Some constraints-*

\* ***Family responsibility*** - Family responsibility mostly lies with the women and often she has to choose between family and career, wherein she gives priority to family. A working woman bears the double burden because she has to look after her office and house. Childcare is another main issue for working mothers, as a result she is usually mentally occupied with the children and household work while she is at work, disrupting her office work.

\* ***Lack of favorable work environment*** - One of the main reasons for the low presence of women in administration/civil service. Problems include sexual harassment, unavailability of an individual room to work, lack of separate rest room facilities, absence of a congenial working environment, inadequate transport facilities, etc.

\* ***Domination*** - Males have a tendency to dominate female colleagues and in many cases female officers receive unequal treatment in distribution of responsibilities.

\* ***Lack of security*** - Most females feel insecure when having to work after the normal office hours, compounded by a transportation problem.

\* ***Social prejudices and cultural conditioning*** - Even among the general public sometimes there exists a notion that women are unsuitable for administrative and challenging jobs, as a result of which they are not accepted as a 'magistrate' or 'police officer' by the public.

### ***(v)Media and Technology***

Media is a generic term applied to mass communication activity in various forms. Indian society has shown an ambivalent attitude towards women in general. On one hand a woman is perceived in the highest regard and worshipped as 'Devi' while on the other she is treated as an inferior and base being. Invariably women are, subjected to hardship and oppression. Commercialization and increased marketization has augmented the projection of a female as a commodity in various forms. The 24 hour news channels, trends of item songs in movies,

Much needs to be done in the realm of the outlook of the court, Attitudes and perspectives have to change in order to bring about speedy justice to women....

advertisements projecting women as a commodity, are examples of media's role in reinforcing gender stereotypes due to lack of sensitization. Commercialisation in the media has increased at the cost of human values.

#### ***(vi) Law and judiciary***

Law has been described as a cobweb; the rich and strong would be able to break it and the poor would be entangled in it. To avoid such situations members of the law enforcement agencies must be educated and sensitised abundantly on gender issues, so that women, particularly those from the lower strata and disadvantaged groups, do not face apathy and callousness while approaching them to seek justice. Law should be seen as an instrument of change. In order to live up to the expectations of women in distress, all persons in administration, police, judiciary, NGOs and the media should be trained to be gender sensitive.

Courts have no doubt played the role of catalysts as far as women's rights are concerned. The judiciary has intervened, and upheld rights for women created awareness on the need to treat women with equality and dignity. However much needs to be done in the realm of the outlook of the court, attitudes and perspectives have to change in order to bring about speedy justice to women in a proper and dignified manner. Law is an instrument of social change and judicial personnel need to be sensitised for social change. A judge must therefore advance the goal of the Constitution - liberty, equality and fraternity.

#### ***(vii) NGO's and Civil Society***

The National Commission for Women has successfully established links with NGOs in different states at district, level, who are networking and who provide necessary information regarding discrimination and atrocities being meted out to women in their respective areas of operation.

## CHAPTER 3

### GROUNDINGS COVERED SO FAR

The present Expert Committee referred to numerous government of India policy documents notable of which are Report of the Kothari Commission (GOI, 1964-66) and the National Policy on Education 1986 (GOI, 1986) and its POA in 1992 (GOI, 1992a) all of which have put enormous emphasis on promotion of gender equity in education by reducing the gender gap in access, retention and transition from one stage to other.

**National Policy on Education** - The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) as revised in 1992 which is a landmark in the field of policy on women's education in that it recognised the need to redress traditional gender imbalances in educational access and achievement. The NPE also recognised that enhancing infrastructure alone will not redress the problem.

*Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralise the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well- conceived edge in favour of women....This will be an act of faith and social engineering.... The removal of women's literacy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services setting time targets and effective monitoring ....*

- (Chapter IV, Page 6, Paragraph 4.2 and 4.3; NPE-1986, Government of India).

The objective of the Committee was also to review existing policies, programmes and schemes for welfare of women and children in the field of education - In this regard, the committee reviewed the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) Programme scheme as an example. It is pertinent to mention here that the focus of the programme is to increase girl child enrolment, so with innovative programmes like this which lead to increased enrolment rates more and more girls will have access to public spaces. Hence imperative to combine academic instruction with healthy and

Increased enrolment rates results in more girls having access to public spaces. Hence imperative to combine academic instruction with healthy and gender sensitive social interaction, in order to make public spaces safe.

**gender sensitive social interaction, in order to make public spaces safe** and also assist in broadening their social networks and sources of social support. For this mobilizing the support of the community is likely to improve the cultural acceptability, effectiveness, and sustainability of such programs.

**Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA)** - Introduced in 2001 reaches out to every district in the country. Its main motive is to bridge and eliminate gender differences in enrollment, retention and quality of learning. It promotes gender equality through free text books for girls, separate toilets for girls, recruitment of 50% women teachers.

However, the CAG report placed in Parliament on 20 August 2006, on the scheme found the programme has only partially achieved its targets during the first four years, from 2001-02 to 2004-05. Even though underfunding was a cause for it, high dropout rates, skewed pupil-teacher ratio, inadequate teacher training and failure to adequately address focus groups such as girls and children with special needs were causes of concern. The objective of SSA was to enroll all out of school children in school, education guarantee centres, alternate schools and back to school camps by 2003. The date was revised to 2005 only in March 2005. However, out of 3.40 crore children (as on 1 April 2001), 1.36 crore (40 per cent) children in the age group of 6-14 years remained out of school as on March 2005 four years after the implementation of the scheme and after having incurred an expenditure of Rs. 11133.57 crore.

- Despite utilisation of 86% of funds, 40% of children in age group 6-14 are out of schools.
- Diversion of funds as well as financial irregularities in many states.
- Supervision and monitoring of the scheme is ineffective at both national and state levels.

## CHAPTER 4

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Recommendations for the Government

**1. Compliance with the National Education Policy - Compliance with the National Education Policy ie. the factors indicated on gender sensitivity be compulsorily implemented**

- The National Policy (1986) states, *“Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, the training and orientation of teachers, decision-makers and administrators and the active involvement of educational institutions’*. Despite almost three decades the points indicated have not been implemented (Part IV Education for equality), and should be implemented immediately.

**2. Formation of task Force - Task force should be formed for change in syllabus to inculcate gender sensitivity and awareness of laws relating to the protection of women/human rights.**

- To bring about gender equality, clear terms of reference be given to the Task Force and a time bound limitation so that results can be seen to ensure that the new generation of India is sensitive to gender and human rights issues.
- Urban and rural schools be treated appropriately keeping the cultural variation in mind.
- Gender sensitisation should become a part of the curriculum. Every subject may adopt a holistic approach where gender sensitivity becomes an integral part of it.
- Like presently, all text books commence with the preamble of The Constitution of India, similarly text books/syllabus to include specific laws for protection of women, so that students are not only equipped with life skills but also learn to respect the law. This should be done right from the primary classes to the higher level according to their capacity, with priority for inclusion given to laws related to crimes which are on the rise.

**Awareness of relationships and hygiene safeguards to be included in syllabus in order to inculcate mature outlook towards body and bodily functions.**

- Basic laws which were taught to the children at the basic level must be again revised at every level/class. It must be taught in detail so that every student has knowledge of the law, not only learns to respect the law but also cannot deny knowledge of the law. In addition female students must be made aware of the protection which is provided to them by law. For example -
  - At the K.G level:**
    - Simple poems
    - Action songs based on equality and worth of girl child
  - At Elementary Level:**
    - Poems and songs
    - Simple stories on brave girls, girls who achieved much in different fields
    - Lessons on Rights of Children, Rights of Girl Child, Say NO to Dowry, lessons on heroic women/girl child etc
  - At the High School Level**
    - Poetry/songs
    - Prose on heroic women/girl children, spots women, social activists, scientist, women who made India proud
    - Lessons on Rights of a Child, Girl child, Children etc.
- Syllabus needs to address human trafficking since children ‘at risk’ of sexual abuse and trafficking. Students should be taught and explained, according to their capacity to comprehend, the difference between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ touch and be encouraged to report any misgiving. Since abuse is not only by adults, but also by older children.
- Education on awareness of relationships and hygiene safeguards to be included in syllabus in order to inculcate mature outlook towards body and bodily functions.

**3. Teachers education (D.Ed and B.Ed) text books should include textual material related to gender sensitivity.**

- In view to make teacher trainees gender/caste sensitive they should be provided with appropriate information and training.
- Teachers training Institutes should take special training from experts working in gender/human rights related areas. Besides trainees should be motivated to prepare materials for gender/human rights sensitive instruction. This should form part of the curriculum.

**4. Attention to gender/human rights issues** - When writing or revising text books, definite attention should be paid to gender/human rights issues especially caste and violence against women, discouraging practices that discriminate against women.

- The visual medium should be used extensively as part of course curriculum and in text books since it has greater impact. Inclusion of list of films and documentaries be shown (optional as per facility available in school) to children on a regular basis which promote gender justice.
- Before writing text books anew, there should be a joint consultation with the heads of the text book committees and gender/human rights experts including representatives of women and child welfare departments.
- Before commencing to write or revise text books a list of principles related to gender/caste sensitivity should be prepared. Women's personal views, and values related to women should be proportionately represented in the text books, with space for women from vulnerable and marginalized sections.
- The special module developed by the committee should be tested, since both urban and rural areas need different approaches.

**5. Gender training** - Gender/human rights training, should be imparted to teachers, concerned officials, staff, including education officials at the Block and District Education Offices, District Education and Training Institutes, supervisors and the members of SDMC.

- All training conducted by DIET, BRC, CRC should contain the subject of gender/human rights.

**Appropriate arrangements should be made so that facilities allotted for girl students are made accessible to them.**

- To make sure that these institutions bear in mind gender/caste sensitivity in their training programmes a team of experts should conduct a review of the same at least once in two years.

**6. Regular studies and reviews - Regular studies and reviews be conducted with regard to gender/caste sensitivity, by experts both from the field of education and gender/human rights. In the process of reviewing, if any obstacles detected immediate action should be taken towards remedying them.**

**7. Networking - In the process of bringing about gender equality in an educational environment, the department of education should network and work in close contact with those institutions working on gender sensitive issues.**

- Gender related material prepared by voluntary organization and other stakeholders on gender related issues (posters, handbills, charts, pictures visual media illustrating girl children's education, women's empowerment, education for adolescents, and other related topics) should be used.
- To impart information adequate arrangements should be made to organize training programmes from such institutions and experts, for teachers and teacher- trainees.

**8. Counseling centres - Every school, including the ashram/madrasa and other centres of learning should have a counseling centre for adolescents.**

- Atleast two teachers in every school (a male and a female) should be given training to acquire skills in counseling adolescents.
- Once a week these adolescent counseling centres should arrange for the girls to

get together and enable them to present/share their problems and get redressal.

- For this, keeping in mind the age groups, a guide with suggestions should be prepared. Also, adequate information materials should be made available to them.

#### **9. Infrastructure to be gender friendly.**

- Adequate arrangements should be made so that in every school for girl students and female staff; in offices of the education department the female staff, have separate wash rooms.
- Care should be taken that in no way embarrassment is caused to girls and female teachers in schools nor to female staff at the block and district level education department.
- Provision should be made for separate rest rooms in schools, in block and district education offices for girls and female staff.

#### **10. Facilities for girl students to be made accessible.**

- Unlike the present arrangement in some States, where scholarships are given at the end of the year they should be made available at the beginning of the academic year for girl students.
- The facilities available should be made known to all parents. There should be provision for such information to be disbursed at the Panchayat.

#### **11. Hostels to provide appropriate facilities.**

- Keeping in mind the need of growing girl children nutritional food should be provided in school.
- In every hostel for girls and boys there should be a counseling centre.
- In hostels for girls and boys, care should be taken to create an environment that will not in anyway cause embarrassment to the girls or to the staff.

**12. Compulsory training for teachers** - It is also very important that there should be compulsory training for the teachers both male and female. Gender sensitization trainings for teachers

**Involvement of PRIs and educational institutions at the grass root level is essential to maximize the benefits of education and development.**

should be organized as they will facilitate the change to be brought about in the syllabus and at policy level. Gender equality is the need of the hour since discrimination is seen subtly existing in all areas of life, including among teachers, regardless of the fact that women proving to be equal in all areas.

**13. Gender awareness in parents** - One of the best possible strategies to minimize gender discrimination in society is to promote gender awareness in parents. To develop a dynamic society it is important to change its mind set.

**14. Institutes to encourage research on gender** - It should be made mandatory for research institutes to encourage research on gender issues, eg gender stereotypes consequences, gender conditioned violence, gender imbalance in the job market etc.

**15. Involvement of PRIs** - Involvement of PRIs and educational institutions at the grass root level is essential to maximize the benefits of education and development. With the objective of revitalizing local bodies, the Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 was passed by Parliament to incorporate Panchayat in Part IX of the Constitution. A major step forward in strengthening the third tier of governance, it's provisions include regular election at village, intermediate, and district levels, and reservation of one-third seats for women etc. What was sought to be achieved thereby was to make Panchayati Raj Institutions instruments through which people could fully participate in the development process, and to promote real devolution of powers, functions and resources to local bodies so that changes at the grassroots level could be effected speedily.

## B. Recommendations for Educational institutions

**1. Value/ Moral Education** - Value education or Moral education classes play a very crucial role in gender sensitization. In a world where the senses are being continuously blasted with negative messages of violence, dishonesty, greed and corruption; it becomes important to inculcate values associated with aspirations concerning importance of women, national identity, national economic growth and positive values associated with prevailing understandings of capitalism. The number of Value/Moral Education classes should be increased to at least twice or thrice every week and compulsory for students at all levels of their education.

**2. Discussions on Gender** - Unfortunately in India violence is built in the linguistic structure and underlines the terms of engagement with persons of the opposite sex. Hence the need for Section 509 in The Indian Penal Code, 1860 which makes word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman a punishable offence. In educational institutions there should be discussions on gender and introduction of sexuality among students specially boys in harmony with the culture and intellectual level of the student. Discussions to covers a wide range of topics such as the sexualisation of society; evolving forms of parenthood and family formation; transgender, sexuality, crime and deviance; the meaning of a variety of forms of masculinity and femininity; and the implications of gender and sexuality for health and wellbeing.

### **3. Online programmes -**

**a. Online alcohol and drug abuse training and counselling programmes must be conducted for students.**

- To not only be aware of the consequences of drug abuse, but also learn how much consumption of alcohol is considered 'responsible drinking'; **specially since alcohol and drug abuse is not uncommon among the youth and often crimes are committed being under influence of alcohol/drugs.**

**b. Students be taught online about the precautionary measures to be adopted while venturing into social networking websites, specially in view of the rising cyber**

Focus should be on creating awareness on the vitality of information and risks of uninhibited exchange of information....

crimes against women, specially harassment and misuse of social networking sites.

- So that it does not put young persons at risk, focus should be on creating awareness on the vitality of information and risks of uninhibited exchange of information of the internet in addition to **the ability to distinguish content from personal and what is inappropriate to share on public platform.**
- Cautioning them from entering adult and hate sites, informing them on the cyber laws of the country and pitfalls of internet.

**c. Imparting knowledge on IT** - Educating students on not only how databases work but also on what security measures should be taken while working and having full access to the internet. Schools and institutions should be equipped with cyber law classes to help students understand the repercussions of growing technologies.

- Awareness of Cyber offences like obscenity, defamation, etc. should be made a part of the curriculum, alongwith the punishments.

**4. Pre - Marital Counselling** - Premarital counseling should be offered to students since it helps both male and female prepare for marriage. It ensures that both partners have a strong, healthy relationship thus increasing chances for a stable & satisfying marriage. Premarital counseling can also help identify weaknesses that could become bigger problems during marriage, specially in view of the fact that most women in India abandons their name and their home to marry and live with man who is a relative stranger; and is often dependent on him for most if not all her needs.

**5. Health and Well being Counseling** - Age appropriate gender sensitive life skills based reproductive and sexual health programs should be integrated at various levels of education, with emphasis on health and appropriate eating habits.

**6. Formation of Gender Clubs** - Encourage formation of Gender Clubs, the



membership of which includes both male and female. It is important that boys are included in discussions of issues that affect women, so that the focus is not only on changing the behaviour of girls but also helping boys understand their responsibilities. Gender club Competitions may be organised based on gender sensitivity. Nukkad Nataks can be organised which are theme based and debates on issues like gender sensitivity should be organised as it can help in gender sensitisation. The Gender Club to develop a manual on Gender Sensitization. The magazine would have a local approach and assist in making young individuals aware of gender issues. This magazine could include articles by social activists, principals and renowned resource persons and could invite suggestions from students and teachers.

- The Gender Club to organize outreach programmes in places like destitute homes, red light areas, and talk to such women on gender issues, while informing them on their rights and protection provided under our country's legal system.

**7. Workshops** - A choice of lectures and interactive workshops should be aimed to make gender stereotypes in society visible, to strengthen the student's ability to identify these issues, and to be sensitive to the gender stereotypes. Lesson should include activities for increasing children's awareness of legal matters. The teacher conducting the workshop/delivering the lecture should be specially qualified for the purpose.

**8. Counselling Centres** -Every school or institution which provides higher education should have a counselling centre. Violence in educational institutions, whether mental or physical has numerous ill effects on the female student with the possibility of impacting attendance and performance. Teachers should be alert to behavioural changes and anomalies in the student, recognizing the signals refer student to the counseling centre; and not dismiss it as typical adolescent problem.

**9. Gender Equality** - Gender biases should be eliminated in every spheres and all students irrespective of gender, caste or creed should be encouraged to play sports and work on projects according to their maximum capability. No child encouraged to take streams/profession on basis of gender. Also the following -

- a. Awareness programmes on laws relating to women, their

**Husbands should be made to attend workshops where gender sensitivity is the core issue alongside with gender equality and value of girl child.**

safety and security of students to be conducted on regular basis.

- b. Educational institutions should ensure proper lighting arrangements in and around their premises, as darkness is conducive to violence against women. The height of the hedges in the campus should be reduced for proper visibility.
- c. Internal security committees should be constituted by all the educational institutions chaired by the head of the institution. Police officers and student representatives should be invited for its meetings to review the security arrangements.
- d. Experts should be invited periodically for inspection of the college area to assess the security needs and arrangements in the campus.
- e. Educational institutions must perform their administrative roles for the safety and security of girl students.
- f. Students should be given proper training in self defence.
- g. The telephone numbers of women helpline, college helpline, and local police station should be displayed at prominent places of the institution; including the national Commission for Women and State Commissions to whom they can complain to in case of apathy of the police or authority.
- h. Entry into educational institution should be restricted i.e through identity card.
- i. Educational institutions can nominate retired police officers in their security committee or boards.
- j. Educational Institutions should ensure de-politicisation of the campus.
- k. Educational Institutions should encourage regular parent and teacher interaction.

## C. Recommendations at Non Formal Levels

### i. for Dropout youth

- **Civic participation** - Civic participation is important for not only healthy youth development, but also to ensure they do not get involved in anti social activities. Civic participation provides youth with opportunities to gain work experience, acquire leadership skills, and to inculcate responsibility and accountability. A system could be implemented where dropout youth co-ordinate with the police.
- **Special classes** - Conducting of special classes in verified and registered Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) and Vocational Training Providers (VTPs) etc. where a diploma is provided so that they can earn a livelihood. Since due to socio-economic circumstances, a youth may be compelled to abandon studies yet have the desire to continue studies and also have the ability and potential to perform. The main objective of the scheme should be to provide employable skills to school leavers, existing workers, ITI graduates, etc; and should include a component of gender sensitisation. Existing skills can also be tested and certified under this scheme.
- To gainfully occupy time at the hands of dropout youth regular skill based trainings, both short and medium term, be imparted so that they can be prepared to meet the service sector requirements eg tourist guide, call centres etc.
- In addition youth clubs, community playgrounds and other facilities be made available where they pass their time in a healthy manner. For sports and recreational activities have positive impact on the youth and promote productivity, foster social harmony and promote team spirit.

**NOTE :** Crimes are committed by all sections of society; but one of the challenges is how to sensitise and bring in the safety net those vagrants and dropout youth whom society has abandoned, and who neither fear nor respect the law. **If from Class 1 to Class 4 they are sensitised on gender issues and taught to respect the law, then the chances of their coming in conflict with law reduces.**

Parents must ensure their children believe in the constitutional rights of equality and dignity and it is their duty to respect women and denounce derogatory practices

## ii. for the Parents

- Pregnant women along with their husbands should be made to attend workshops where gender sensitivity is the core issue alongside with gender equality and value of girl child. Persons participating in these activities must be given a handout which informs them about the various welfare schemes and policies of the government.
- Workshops and other activities should be held in a place which is easily accessible and is peaceful. Alternatives must be made available for those who are working on those days and have consequently missed the class because of work or some other genuine reason, with option of holidays as well.
- While admitting children to school, parents must be counselled properly and guided as to what are the needs and requirements of school going children. This can later be extended to every year and then every term. These sessions must also be able to raise awareness on different social issues and promote gender equality along with gender sensitivity.
- Parents must be counselled as to why they should not discriminate between children on the grounds of sex, caste, etc. Every parent must treat their child equally. Gender should never be a basis for discrimination.
- Moral education can be provided at school, but, it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their children adopt all the right values. It is their responsibility to correct their child when the child is wrong.
- Parents must ensure that their children believe in the constitutional rights of equality and dignity and it is their duty to respect women and denounce derogatory practices.

## D. Recommendations for policy makers and the executive

- Need to sensitise law enforcement agencies, elected representatives and executive on gender issues since often it has been seen that sexist, regressive and crass remarks have been made with a tendency to cave in to mounting patriarchal pressure.
- Every policy for the masses is formulated by the legislature, executed by the executives and implemented by the police. It is important that gender sensitisation of the policy makers and the executive, initiated from the village level to the central level takes place through the medium of interactive workshops and refresher courses.
- The executive should also be sensitised on gender issues. Combined workshops should be conducted where officials come together at the district level. This way: a) everyone would know each other. i.e., the gap which exists shall be reduced, b) new ideas can be exchanged which can then be implemented for the betterment of the society, for it is an undisputed fact that a dynamic society needs to change its mindset.
- Discrimination of women by disparity in wages, job promotion and advancement, denial of jobs to women in public/ private sector employment should be discouraged and reported.
- Positive Gender discrimination should be considered in favour of women in order to:
  - Bridge the existing gap between men and women.
  - Enable women to have an impact at policy making level.
  - Enable women to be fully represented at important levels of the national machinery, especially the higher levels.

## E. Recommendations for the Police

- Police officials should regularly visit schools and familiarize them with the laws and complaint mechanism. Vice versa students should be sent on field trips to Police Stations. This shall be helpful in ensuring that nobody is intimidated by approaching a police person for help or of visiting a police station to register a complaint.

**Parents must ensure their children believe in the constitutional rights of equality and dignity and it is their duty to respect women and denounce derogatory practices**

- Gender sensitization should be included in training at induction level.
- The government should carry out aggressive publicity for motivating women to join the police force.

## **F. Recommendations for the Media**

- Media should play active role in countering gender and caste discrimination.
- They should display greater sensitivity in reporting gender issues. For on one hand patriarchal societies try to control women's freedom and sexuality, while on the other hand the emergence of a 'consumer society' in today's economy further commodifies her. Both worlds seem antithetical, yet the aim of both is common ie to objectify a woman; difference being that one induces her to conceal her body and the other reveal.
- There should be a committee which monitors gender bias or discriminatory depiction of women in media, since it plays a pivotal role in opinion formation in our country.
- Media can play a role in sensitizing the public on gender issues specially at the workplace, in view of the fact that more and more women are joining the workplace and it is important to provide them a conducive environment.
- Advertisements promoting gender sensitisation and gender equality should be carried by Newspapers, TVs, FM Channels and different websites having large readership /viewership base.
- Awareness programmes should be packaged as such that they not only provide information but are also entertaining, in order to get greater TRPs/viewership.
- Persons, specially women who have excelled in leadership, science, social work etc should be covered in media extensively.
- The media, both print and electronic, should carry positive portrayal of women.
- Glamorising stories of atrocities on women such as rape and sexual abuse by repeated transmissions should be avoided as they have a negative impact on the youth and children and tend to desensitise.

