VOLUME IV, ISSUE II, JULY 2015
ISSN 2277-8071
IMPACT FACTOR 0.785(GIF)
IMPACT FACTOR 1.315 (ISRA)
An International Refereed, Peer Reviewed And Indexed Quarterly Journal In Arts, Commerce, Education & Social Sciences

GENDER EQUITABLE APPROACH IN EDUCATION

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RESEARCH PAPER IN EDUCATION

MANUSRIPT INFO
Received : 01/06/2015
Reviewed: 03/06/2015
Accepted: 05/06/2015

KEYWORDS
Society,class rooms quality and equality

ABSTRACT

Even in the 21st century in spite of high techno discoveries the attitude of the society towards girls has not changed. Many times girls are consider less capable than boys in many traits. But Why? Same is the case of education. It is considered that girls are meant for domestic chores. So they do not need that kind of education as boys need. It is a societal perception that since boys would be future bread earners so right from childhood a girl has to face many types of discrimination, for which she is not meant. Girls also have equal right to education and all the facilities and privileges which a boy avails. Why a girl is not given a due share or why she is treated differently. This is a big question. Although it has been seen that in many societies of the world females contribute almost the equal or more than males. So it is the duty of society and community to promote gender equality. For promoting gender equitable approach education should be major basis that is it should be given to all.

Education for all means enrolling and retaining both boys and girls in school. Education is the key to develop inner potential and further enriches the personality in total. An educated person contributes to the society in many different ways, economically, socially, rationally etc. which in turn makes the world a better place. To ensure equality in the access to education, the curriculum and teaching practices should treat girls and boys as equals without any discrimination. If a boy can learn something, why a girl cannot? However at many instances, it is seen that girls excel better than boys, even with less opportunities. In spite of the proven abilities of the girls they are treated as inferior. So it becomes the responsibility of the government to develop equality in curriculum and education policies.

What is curriculum : Curriculum is defined as the course of study in school or college. It reflects the knowledge that the society consider appropriate to teach in schools. Society and curriculum are interdependent on each other in many aspects. While framing curriculum it is essential that it provides the equality of educational opportunity to all irrespective of gender. Curriculum and teaching ideologies should not reflect gender inequality of any kind. Every illustration or picture in the book should show that both boys and girls are equally capable. Learning content, language, assessment procedures all form the component of curriculum and all these should reflect equal and fair treatment for everyone.

Society and curriculum : The opinion of people is made by the existing wave in the society. In many societies there is a presumption that girls cannot excel in mathematics or accounts. So they are discouraged from taking such subjects and diverted into other streams like home science, humanities, music, arts, designing etc. This type of discrimination creates gender inequalities in children. Society is responsible for creating these type of concepts to some extent. Concepts are not generated suddenly it is being imbibed in individual from the very young age. The teacher, the families, education and curriculum are all governed by the society we live in. So we need to bring change in our society in order to remove the disparities. Society is made by the people. The people individually have to change in order to develop a structure which supports equalization of opportunities.

Promoting gender equality in class rooms :

1. Gender equality cannot be taken as separate subject. It is the cumulative effort which is impacted by all the elements of schooling including teaching, learning, evaluation, interaction both in class rooms and the play ground that is in every move which is made.
2. Girls from very tender age are taught to speak less in front of others (specially outsiders) as a result they feel hesitant to express themselves or develop shyness. This very nature is predicted in the class room environment also and they participate less. Girls should be encouraged to come forward and participate in all kind of discussions in the class.
3. The delivery of the curriculum and the approach of the teacher is very important for the students to learn. If there is presupposition in the mind frame of the teacher that girls have less intellectual abilities and they may not do well in subjects which need more conceptual understanding (like science, mathematics etc.). The girls will certainly not do well. Instead if the girls are encouraged by the teachers to participate equally than there is high probability that girls perform well. The conducive attitude of the teachers helps a lot in learning because it is the teacher who can make the most complicated things simple and interesting.

Key aspects of gender equitable curriculum :

The content of curriculum should ensure that girls from the weaker section of the society also benefit from education and their confidence is boosted-up or build-up. This change can bring transformations in their life and help them to earn their livelihood in a dignified way, which in turn to eradicate poverty.

Children, who belong to geographically backward area, find it difficult to understand the common language

because dialect use in home environment may not be same as in educational institution. So the teacher should understand the problems of such children and try to bridge the gap by giving individual attention to such children, so that they are able to cope well.

The school environment the text books, the attitude of the teacher, the educational policies etc. should convey the message of equality. The participation of girls should be ensured everywhere whether class, playground or stage because all provides different kinds of platform for the personality grooming.

Some important aspects of curriculum development :

1. The curriculum should be standardized in terms of both quality and equality. This needs to be done in compliance with governmental guide lines.
2. Curriculum development is a process which should not be done by only of few but it should involve the opinions and inputs from all levels of the society.
3. While planning and formulating budget, officials at all levels should ensure gender equality.
4. Management of educational resources should be used both for the benefit of boys and girls.
5. Teacher education programs should include training in gender equality both in pre-service as well as in-service.
6. Schools should be made aware of existing policies for gender equality and they should implement these policies in order to establish a gender equitable environment.

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