



" Role of Gender Champions in an Educational Institution & use of ICT in Gender Sensitisation"

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ABSTRACT

"ICT can be a powerful catalyst for Women Empowerment. It will prove a tool to promote gender equality. There are a number of strategies that might control are discussed through this paper. The said strategies may be supporting networks of women's rights, including online rights, provision of sensitizing Policy makers to gender issues, building awareness among ICT users on gender based violence considering state intervention regarding issues, laws and social norms, values & offline, considering implications of particular conditions and patterns of access and use of ICT. And demographic differences on account of age, level of education etc. The next and foremost strategy may be providing support to efforts for creating content on women's needs and voices through online specifically. Men's control over technology and their adherence to a technological world view have consequences for language and verbal communication and create a situation where women are silenced. As we know that much equipment tends to be gender typed. There are machines and tools which are more suitable for men such as saws, trucks, wrenches, guns and forklifts for e.g – vacuum cleaners, sewing machines, food- processors are the machines which are suitable for women. Male counterparts of each society repairs vehicles, derive large lorries, build houses, design and prepare more technical and scientific tools. We know that not all males do all of these things but all concerned actions define a male dominated scenario that women's entry is mere exception only. Therefore, domination over physical world or material world and over nature is part of the technical view which is the male norm. On the other convert, women generally do not think that they have the right to control over the material world. They have low confidence in their capacity to do so and have doubts either. In this way, it will be very difficult for males to make use of technology created and developed by female folk".

Key words: Gender, Gender Champion, Gender sensitivity, Technology, Gender sensitisation and ICT

I. INTRODUCTION

"...We looked at industry research that says that if the legal profession promotes women to the same level that it has attrition, it will be 2027 before we reach 30% of women in senior positions..." (Daniel Danso)



In India, discriminatory attitude towards men and women have existed for generations and affect the lives of both genders. Although the Constitution of India has granted men and women equal rights, gender disparity still remains. From childhood, girls are encouraged to take the traditional female roles. They become victims of a discrimination socialization process. When a girl grows up a bit, she has to take care of younger siblings, collect fuel, fetch water and even to cook food. In other words, the girls child labour begins at home itself and her family is the first to exploit her. Whenever, there is any talk of women in development at the national or international level, a very important statistics which is often quoted to show the fact that economic development does not guarantee improvement in the status of women in sex-ratio of Indias economically highly developed states viz. Haryana and Punjab. Sex ratio (number of females per thousand males in population) is an important indicator which is taken as a measure of the extent of gender equity prevailing in any society at any given time. In India, sex ratio has remained unfavourable to women throughout the last centuries.

The 2011 Census data presented very gloomy scene for the child sex ratio. The ratio of girls to boys in the 0-6 years age group has declined from 927 in 2001 to 919 in 2011, the lowest since independence. The total sex ratio of India as per 2011 Census is 940 females per 1000 males. The report further showed that the sex ratio crisis was comparatively higher in rural areas than urban areas. While the child sex ratio in rural India declined from 934 in 2001 to 923 in 2011, urban area reported a decline from 906 in 2001 to 905 in 2011. Such skewed distribution of the child sex ratio in India has been largely attributed to the acute son preference prevailing in the country. Across several parts of India, sons add to the familys upward social mobility by being potential Dowry earners and also are endowed with certain cultural/religious rights (Samiyar, 2008). The socio-cultural practices of women vulnerable in the family of marriage and this lower her access to resources both within the household and at the societal level (Kaur, 2004).

The extreme form of devaluation of women had been the practice of female infanticide. Nearly 10 million female foetuses have been aborted in the country over the past two decades. Arnold et al.(2001) used NSS data and reported the use of amniocentesis for sex selection of children in Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab. They reported that there are 1.30 million induced abortions in India every year of which over one lakh are sex selective abortions following an ultrasound/amniocentesis test. In Haryana, sex ratio of lowest of all the states (Census of India, 2011). For the solution of this problem of gender discrimination ,the idea to appoint Gender Champions is relevant.It will be fruitful if implemented systematically in an effective manner.

A)Gender Champion:--

According to TOI reports, the initiative to take this step was taken by the women and child development ministry. Last year also, the institutes were instructed by the UGC to appoint gender champions among students so as to promote equal treatment for both the genders on the campus.(Times of India , Aug.,15, 2015)



B) Role of Gender Champion:--

As per guidelines issued by University Grant Commission, it has been decided that the Gender-champions will facilitate an enabling environment within their schools and colleges where girls are treated with dignity and respect.

Gender is a neutral term that describes the roles of a society determined by Political, Economic, Social and Cultural factors rather than their biological make up. As per UNESCO document on **Gender Sensitization**, "**Gender Sensitivity**" is not about putting women against men. On the contrary,

- (I,) it is a form of Education that has **gender sensitive benefits** for members of both sexes.
- (ii) It helps them determine which assumptions in matters of gender are valid and which are stereotyped generalizations.
- (iii) **Gender awareness** requires not only intellectual effort but also empathy and open-mindedness.
- (iv) It opens up the widest possible range of life options for both women and men. It is well known that Survival- skills or life- skills which in turn gives employable learning experiences. Social- skills are to be demonstrated once at a time through videos, stories, skits, case-studies, highlight the sufferings of individuals, reason being lacking in any particular skill or any other. Nobody can deny the growing influence of the Internet and melange (blend) of information available to the highly energetic minds of young generations at present. Therefore, online parenting and Intensive counseling sessions for parents have also become the need of the hour for them to understand that excess of everything is bad. Parents must make efforts to break shades of so called age barriers and discuss issues of sex, abuse and sense of **Good-Bad touch** with their children extensively.

According to Roberta Williams, "I appreciate the sentiment that I am a popular women in computer gaming circles ; but I prefer being thought of as a computer game designer rather than a woman game designer. I don't put myself into gender mode when designing a game."

C) Gender champions may make the Use of Technology in Gender Sensitisation to facilitate the said process more effective & efficient. It has been shown in more easy steps which are given as below: ----

- 1) Subtle ways must be replaced by the use of relevant technology and innovative tools to generate a thought process for the young generation.
- 2) Audio-visual Presentations(PPT), Slide-shows, Case-studies, Story-telling through Projections, Skits, Dramas and Role-plays can bring a healthy change in Gender- parity which can only be initiated only on the removal of Gender-stereotypes of a particular society.
- 3) Cinema can play a powerful role in instilling gender sensitivity among young boys and girls. A meaningful cinema can go for a long way in building respect for women.
- 4) Internet and media also influence a lot in many concerns in the society.



- 5) It devotes and also neutralizes the ill- effects that arises from time to time in the society.
- 6) AEP Programme (Adolescent Education Programme) initiated by CBSE is one of the powerful instruments in creating new thinking in the minds of children of school age about human Gender and how to handle it responsibly.,
- 7) Courses in self-defence for girls to provide physical and psychological training to boost their self-confidence.
- 8) New techniques like TyKwando, Karate are introduced in educational institutions to empower the society.
- 9) Gender and STEM (science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).Adopting STEM practices that promote gender equality in education.

D) Significance of this review based work on Gender Champions, their role & ICT in the process of Gender Sensitisation:--

Gender Sensitization precedes over Gender Sensitivity which refers to the modifications of behaviour by raising awareness of Gender- equality- concerns. Gender-Sensitizations is one of the basic requirements for the normal development of an individual. Without knowing the needs of a particular gender, an individual may devoid from understanding the opposite gender, The need for this sensitivity has been felt and realised through times immemorial throughout the world.Value- added-education through technology like presentations on Computer or computer- assisted- instructions(CAI) will cultivate healthy thoughts and open-mindedness filled with compassion.

E) DISCUSSION:--

Gender- sensitivity is a part of every curriculum at school level in Haryana as per my observation.'**Gender Wall**' can be demolished thorough the use of enrich language with the **blend of technology** and co-operative learning, Research- performance of activities on laying emphasis on gender equality by the responsible persons of society.Internet and media are an important and integral part of student-life and needs to be implemented effectively to promote '**Gender Sensitive Education**'. National Girl Child Day, Vigilance Awareness Week, Literacy Day etc shed light on the gender issues and purpose can be attained in more concrete form through the use of technology. Road-show with gliding features is more evident in this regard. Mukesh (2013) in a study conducted among 100 households of Hisar district of Haryana State found necessity of son to carry on the family name, to earn for family and to perform last rites of the parents. The main reason given by general castes respondents for necessity of a son are to inherit property for cultivation, to earn for family and to carry family name. Parents are the primary influence on gender role development in the early years of ones' life (Kaplan, 1991; Miller, 1987; Santrock, 1994). This view is supported by Saraceno (1988), who stated that the family is the social and symbolic place in which differences, in particular and sexual differences, is believed to be fundamental and at the same time constructed.



Educational institutions can screen films, serials, documentaries, Video- programming as raised gender- related-issues and develop a healthy sense of respectful behaviour towards opposite sex. "SWOT"factor analysis (Strengths, Weakness, opportunity and Threat) can help one to recognize individual behaviour of the students and to fight with gender sensitive and other co-related issues today but this will be more effective with the blend and use of technology. Thus, gender-based prejudices and economic hardships both operate on girls' depriving them of enjoying their childhood.

It can be concluded that Gender-Champions may combat the problems related with gender issues quite efficiently & effectively more technically indeed growing with the young minds while remaining in Educational-Institutions too. Therefore, someone rightly remarked as:--

"We have began to raise daughters more like sons but few have the courage to raise our sons more like as our daughters"- (Gloria Steinem.)

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