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A Descriptive Literature Review: Scrutinizing Gender Sensitisation In Education Sector

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Abstract

Gender sensitisation is modifying the behaviour of the individual towards the genders. It is a powerful tool to change the thought process of the individual by breaking the stereotype and patriarchal notions of the society. Education system plays a cardinal role in elimination of gender inequality. It has a potential to change and transform the society by building a positive gender equity ideology. It's a high time to reshape the ideology by cultivating a strong, rational and progressive society towards the genders to have a gender equitable environment. This paper sheds the light on the factors that stimulates gender sensitivity in schools. Researcher has identified four aspects of gender sensitisation such as, School Infrastructure and Management, Classroom Practices, Instructional Material and Gender Based Violence.

Keywords: Education, School, Gender Discrimination, Gender Sensitisation.

1. Introduction

Education is an act of imparting and acquiring knowledge or skills for developing the power of judgement and reasoning for oneself and for others to maintain a well mature quality life. Education system is a powerful weapon which act as a positive driving force to face the challenges of the society. This weapon is all a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing others human right (Ranganath et al., 2011). Over all development of the individual in an inclusive, equitable and secure manner is the vital aim of education.

In today's scenario citizens face challenges of discrimination from the time of birth on the basis of gender, caste, religion and race. Society is prevailing with many issues due to gender biasness such as, dowry, son preference, women harassment; the society requires being gender sensitive (Alba, 2019). Several endeavours should be set to extirpate the problem. Considerable time has been wasted to resist one another for the

defunct deeds, but now efforts should be laid to make headway by working jointly towards framing a gender sensitive society (Ghatvisave, 2016). Society has a herculean believe since ages than men and women are 'unequal identities'. Education is the burliest tool in sensitising the society by reforming the mind-set of the individual towards gender (Kute, 2016). Rebuilding the society in the most effective and non-confrontationist approach where sensitisation is a powerful vehicle to drive the force towards gender equality (Kale, 2016).

Gender sensitisation refers to unfurl the awareness and revamping the behaviour of the individual towards gender equality concern (Deshmukh, 2016). It is the earnest need of an hour as it tends to modify the perception and attitude towards all the gender by disintegrating the stereotype and patriarchal notion of the society (Chaven, 2016). Gender stereotype and orthodox practices can be transmuted by building a positive gender based framework in the minds of an individual (Thosare, 2016). The stereotype image is reshaped by spreading awareness and then an affirmative gender equity ideology is build. Education system has the potential to trigger the changes and to reshape a gender neutral milieu in the society by reforming the society's ideology towards the empowerment of all genders. Schools can act as a yardstick where facilitators would be the agents in building creative gender sensitive minds (Esteves, 2018).

Gender inequality has deepened its roots in the society. With the rising trend of social intolerance and gender based violence various efforts are taken to address the issues of gender discrimination (Jackson & Judith, 2020). Numerous initiations have been taken by the government and sundry laws are also amended in the constitution but the growth on gender inequality is immensely proliferate (Patel & Shaikh, 2016).

School caters in overall growth and development of the individual in every aspects of life. It can play an essential role in gender sensitisation by building a positive gender based ideology in the young minds towards the genders. The first step towards gender equality should begin at the school level but the school level. Schools infrastructure and management should be gender sensitive but still from decade's gender discrimination in school is seen in the classroom setting, in the teaching learning process which are meant to build a gender inequitable environment. The textbook act as an instrument to transfer source of knowledge and information (Shukla, 2016). They should be gender sensitive but the traditional perception is imbedded in content, language and images of the textbook. Gender based violence in the school is one of the paramount concern which is due to the gender insensitive behaviour done towards each other.

This papers explores the factors that stimulate gender insensitivity in schools through Literature Review. Researcher has identified four aspects of gender sensitisation are School Infrastructure and Management, Classroom Practices, Instructional Material and Gender Based Violence.

In order to understand the gender sensitisation in education, a detailed analysis of the existing literature review was intensively conducted. In this research paper Gender Sensitisation and education is discussed in detail. Section 2, discusses about the need of gender sensitivity and the perception towards gender sensitivity. Research methodology and criteria of selection of research papers is discussed in detail in section 3. Further, sections of the research paper discusses about the aspects of gender sensitisation in the education sector which needs keen attention to terminate the gender issues from the society.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Gender Sensitisation and Education

Gender and sex have different meaning but sometime these words are used interchangeably. Gender is a psychological term. The society constructs roles, behaviour and attitude for men and women. Whereas, the scientific view about sex is that it is a biological division between male, female and transgender. The issue is due to the complex as male is regarded superior (Barodia, 2015).

Gender sensitisation is a driver through which people can modify gender stereotype and traditional thinking of the society. The mentality of the individual will change and then, men and women can equally participate in social, economically, cultural and political activities regardless of the gender (Gure, 2016). It helps people in questioning the reality they thought they know by examining their own beliefs and personal attitude. Education can be a catalyst in proffering gender sensitive education by spreading the awareness and reshaping the behaviour towards gender inequality. The school plays a vital role in eradicating the problem of gender discrimination from the society. The dissenting impact of the gender stereotype can be transformed into an affirmative impact if gender sensitive education is provided in the school from the childhood. A positive gender ideology can be a weapon to eradicate the gender issues from the society by creating a gender friendly milieu (Alba, 2019).

Gender sensitisation is a movement of transforming the mentality of the individual towards gender. It aims at bringing change in thinking practices and approach of the individual concerning with gender issues.

According to (Deore, 2016) following are the steps towards gender sensitisation:-

- **Change in Perception-** The first step towards gender sensitisation is to modify the perception towards men, women and transgender. Perception is the ability to understand and recognise behaviour. It plays a vital role in solidifying strength of existing perception towards gender inequality. The gender stereotypical image can be reshaped through the transformation in the perception of the individual. The general perception towards male, female and transgender can be melt down by sensitising them towards each other. All the identities of the society have equal role in changing the perception towards gender sensitisation. Modification in perception will definitely bring the change in the society by developing a gender free environment through maintaining gender equal ideology.
- **Recognition-** If the perception of the individual is modified towards gender equality they will themselves start identifying the gender based issue in the society. Male will begin to recognise the virtues of women and their importance in the society leading to equal involvement of all the genders in multifarious activities. The reluctant men who were not acknowledging the contribution of women in the society will be influenced by sensitising their contribution. The gender sensitive contribution is the key for the equal contribution of male, female and transgender in the society.
- **Accommodation-** Gender barrier starts crumbling down in the society slowly over the personal problem of adjustment. With the change in perception and recognition the individual tends to rationalise the behaviour. Instead of complaining about each other it is important to exercise patience and restraint things in a positive way. A room of gender friendly environment is needed to be developed to detach the traditional thinking and gender stereotypical image through the instrument of gender sensitisation.
- **Action-** Society is creating gender inequality, therefore it is pre-requisite to frame a gender sensitive ideology by nurturing and flourishing them in all the spheres of life. Affirmative action should be taken to develop a gender friendly environment. Gender sensitisation can act as an instrument to change the society by transforming or empowering the genders.

2.2 Need of Gender Sensitisation

Sensitisation is the most efficacious approach in reforming the society (Deore, 2016). Gender sensitisation is a process of altering the perception of men and women towards each other by breaking the gender stereotype thinking of the society. There are several gender issues in our society which needs keen attention as there is a dearth of recognition and appreciation (Barodia, 2015).

The orthodox and traditional thinking begins to die with the beginning of gender sensitization thereafter, it furthers reshapes the perception of the individual towards the gender (Deshmukh, 2016). The process of gender sensitisation develops the understanding about the gender roles by treating each other with dignity and equal chance in each sphere of life.

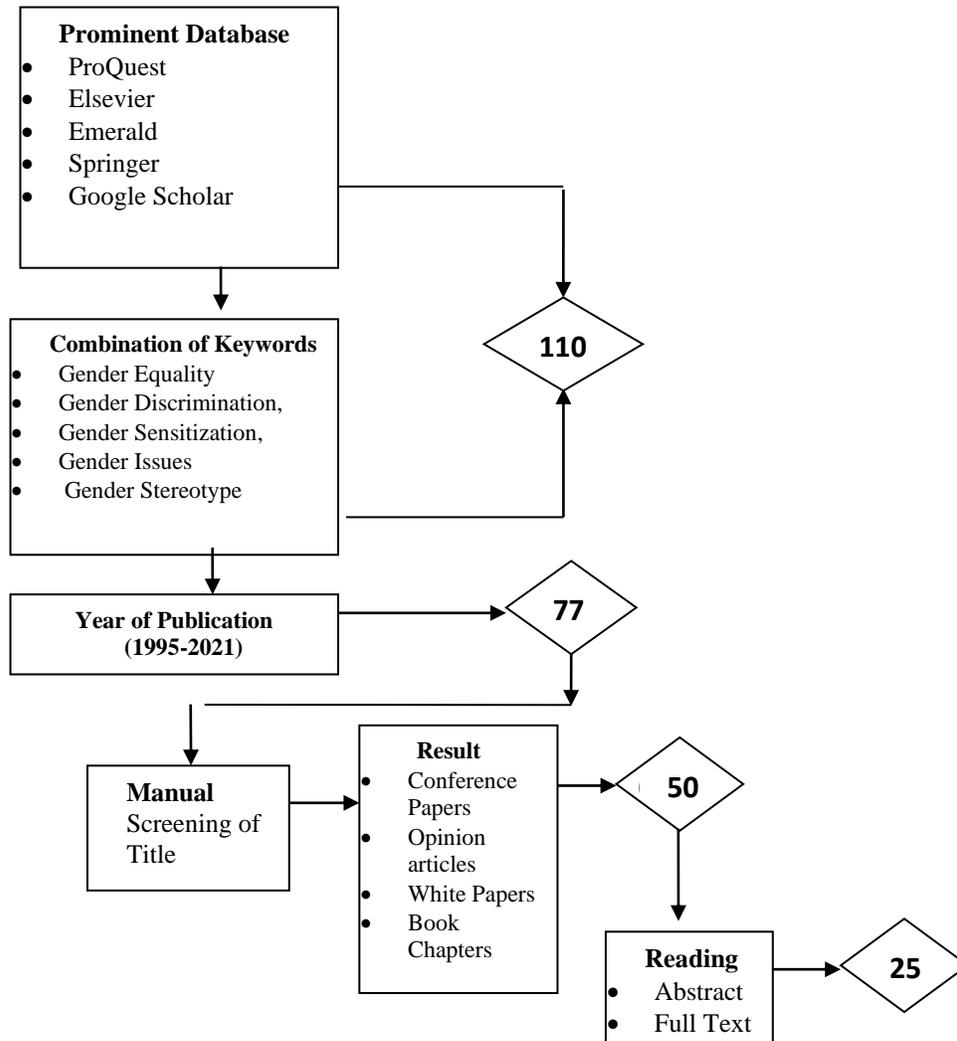
Modifying the Gender relations and power in a community is the key to success to obtain gender equity. Two main strategies for addressing gender equality include transformation and empowerment. If the society needs to be gender sensitive then these two strategies needs to be implemented to change the gender relation in the society (Baviskar, 2016). The foremost aim of gender sensitisation is to bring positive orientation in the thinking, practice and approach of the individual by changing the mind-set towards gender issues (Naraynrao & Gingine, 2016).

3. Research Methodology

The main aim of literature review is to extracted the research gaps, conceptualize future research areas with prior research. It is a systematic process of searching, filtering and classifying the research papers. After reviewing 110 research papers which were selected through the several prominent databases ProQuest, Elsevier, Emerald, Springer and Google Scholar and others. Relevant Research papers to the topic were identified from these databases and subsequent combinations of keywords were used like “Gender Equality, Gender Discrimination, Gender Sensitization, Gender Issues, Gender Stereotype” Keeping Education Sector as common from 1995 to 2020.

The preliminary search for the research papers resulted in a total of 110 hits and then the further filtration was conducted. The filtration was done in two steps. In the first step the manual scanning of the titles of all the research papers were performed so as to remove the irrelevant one. The segregation of the research papers was conducted on the basis of elimination of duplicates, white papers, book chapters, proceeding papers and opinion articles. Reading the Abstract and full text of the research paper is the 2nd step of the filtration. In this process of filtration the researcher was able to remove the papers that were not relevant to the topic as the key concept. After the filtration the researcher was remained only with 25 peer review papers which were closely related to the concept of gender sensitization. These papers reflected that the education sector is highly insensitive and there is a need to identify the key areas which needs to be gender sensitive. The reviewed research paper assists to identify the four aspects of gender sensitisation in the education sector.

Diagram 1: Flowchart Representing the Process of Research Methodology



4. Discussion

Table 1: Result of Classification

S. no.	Author	School Infrastructure & Management	Classroom Practices	Instructional Material	Gender based violence
1	Patel & Shaikh, 2016	√	√		
2	Gure, 2016	√	√	√	√

3	Allana et al., 2010	√	√	√	
4	Lumandi&Shongwe, 2010		√	√	√
5	Barodia, 2015	√	√	√	
6	Marshall &Reinhartz, 1997		√	√	
7	Narayanrao&Gingine, 2016		√		√
8	Baviskar, 2016	√	√	√	
9	Deshmukh, 2016		√		√
10	Chaven, 2016	√	√	√	
11	Doere, 2016		√		√
12	Panigrahi, 2016		√	√	√
13	Obiunu, 2013				√
14	Frawley, 2015		√	√	√
15	Sebastian, 206		√		√
16	Ranganath et al., 2011				√
17	Tatar & Emmanuel, 2001		√	√	√
18	Nayak, 2014		√	√	√
19	Sharma, 2016			√	
20	Abrahams & Sommerkorn, 1995	√	√		√
21	Sharma, 2017		√		
22	Annetta et al., 2007			√	√
23	Kale,2016		√		√
24	Kesici,2008	√			√
25	Gul et al., 2012	√		√	

The above table 1, depicts the four aspects of gender sensitisation such as School Management and Infrastructure, Class Practices, Instructional material and Gender based violence in the education sector. All these four aspects are highly sensitive and an ambitious endeavour has to be laid on them. Education is the primary tool through which we can reshape the traditional mentality of the individuals and will succour to build an affirmative gender environment. The first step is to examine the perception of the individual towards gender sensitisation. Moreover, schools take initiation to unfurl cognizance by training the young minds and making them gender sensitive.

Figure2. Aspects of Gender Sensitisation

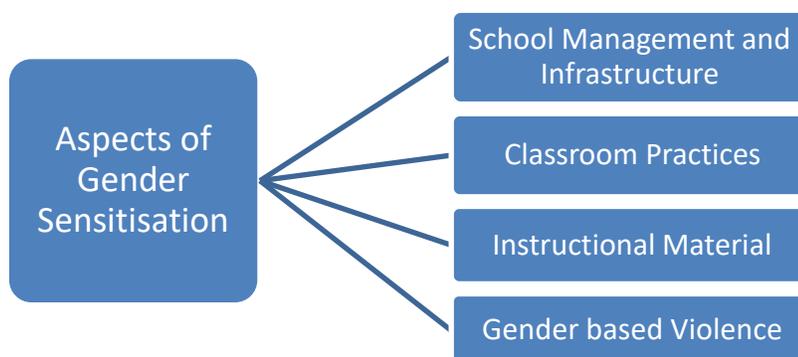
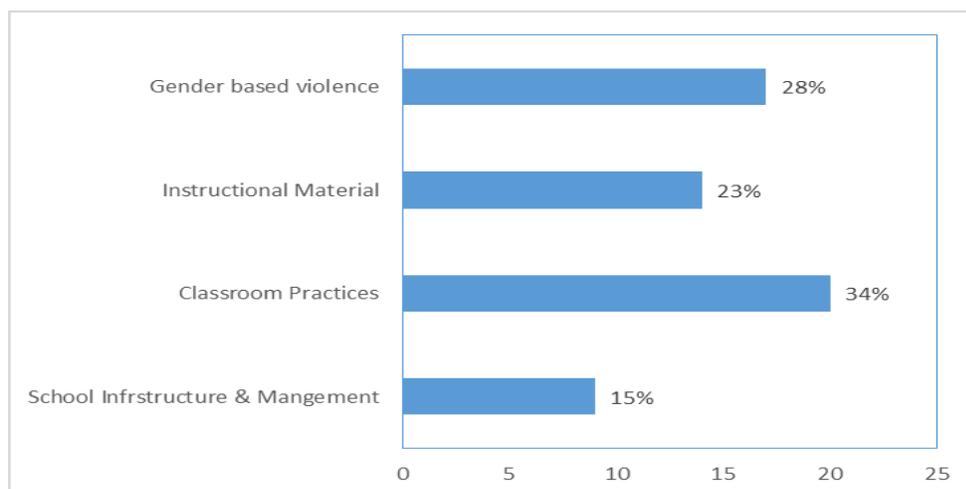


Figure1. Bar Graph Representation on Four Aspects of Gender Sensitisation



The above bar chart indicates the four aspects of gender sensitisation in schools. Classroom Practices is ranked as the highest gender sensitive aspects. There are numerous gender insensitive behaviour done by the teacher in the classroom setting which affects the behaviour of students towards each other creating gender inequitable environment. Gender based violence is another supremely rated aspect. It is physical and psychological maltreatment of a child which are conducted in the school premises due to the unhealthy gender insensitive environment. School infrastructure and management is the lowest ranked aspect among the various aspects of gender sensitisation. The Physical environment of the school should be equitable for all the gender. Special programs should be held to modify the behaviour of the students and teachers towards each other to create a gender balance environment.

4.1 School Infrastructure and Management

School has a vital role to provide a safe and secure learning environment to the students. Authorities within the school should ensure that school is free from the issues of discrimination or violence. School should have gender friendly committee to address the gender based violence in the school (Abrahams & Sommerkorn, 1995). School administration department needs to be gender sensitive and should ensure the workshop for students, teaching and non-teaching staff. Equal participation of all the genders in the school is essential for the empowerment of all the genders (Gul et al., 2012).

4.2 Classroom Practices

Traditional thinking and the gender roles that are divided by the society are the root cause of gender

discrimination. The boys are considered to be strong and independent whereas girls are considered to be weak. Gender biasness in education is embedded through textbook, lessons, language and teacher interactions with the students in the classroom puts spot light on males and relegate females to the sidelines of invisibility (Sebastian, 2016). Classroom environment allows continuous interaction between the teachers and students (Ifegbesan, 2010). Classroom has numerous gender insensitive behaviors which are shown by the teacher to the students intentionally or unintentionally (Erden, 2009). The gender discrimination by the teacher can be noted by teachers praises, providing positive feedback for the response, criticism, encouraging the students to correct their answer (Raina, 2012). Gender biasness in classroom can be elucidated through an example, where attention is laid towards boys by the teachers to encourage them to speak in the class and be more social conversely; Girls become quieter and learn to be passive as compared to the male classmates (Ara & Malik, 2012).

The emphasis of the teacher should be on the student's problem, critical thinking and decision making skill that needs to be inculcated in boys, girls and transgender. Teachers and students all should be equally gender sensitive. Gender specific problem such as boys teasing girls & using abusive language subject based disparities by the teacher of the classroom should be dealt on time. Teachers can use different strategies for establishing healthy interactive sessions by building a positive gender based ideology, this can eliminate gender disparities from the young minds and modify the society by establishing a gender friendly environment. Gender sensitive approach needs to be inculcated in teaching as, it provides equal opportunity and participation of all the genders. (Kumar R. , 2013). Gender responsive teaching and learning can eliminate the negative behavior and gender friendly learning environment can be forged (Lumadi & Shongwe, 2010).

4.3 Instructional Material

Instructional Material is the primary instrument for imparting formal curriculum. It is most accessible and affordable resource available to students. Recurrence of gender biasness and stereotyping is a result of hidden curriculum. Through textbook the lessons of the curriculum are imparted which portray biasness and stereotypical gender roles (Sadker & Zittleman, 2007). The discrimination in the textbook portrays unfair sharing of the domestic work among family members. The representation in Instructional Material merely manifests the inequality of females, males and transgender. Biasness is depicted in the content and visual representation from the preschool to the higher secondary level (Dawar & Anand, 2017). . Instructional Material foster the practice of gender equality at the early stages such as, example showing crying girls; beating girls should be avoided.

The realistic portrayal of life should be depicted in the Instructional Material by sharing the same responsibilities by male, female and transgender. Instructional Material can be a powerful vehicle for reducing the gender inequality by sensitizing the society towards gender. Representation in the textbook should reflect positive role models for all the genders. Constructive change should be reflected in the textbook to frame an affirmative concept towards the genders (Bhattacharya, 2017).

4.4 Gender Based Violence

The most heinous crime done with children with is gender based violence (Kumar et al., 2012). It's ghastly breach of the commitment to the society to protect the innocent from an appalling violation. Gender based violence is psychological and physical maltreatment to the child. It is highly grave in nature. It's a dark reality of our daily life's but in majority of cases it is unnoticed and unreported (Frawley, 2005).

The violence has many forms such as psychological, physical, sexual violence and neglect the students

face within the school. It exhibits a range of behavioural problems including depression, anxiety and violence towards peers (Cheag & Yuen, 2016). Its impact has an adverse effect on the victims and the effect of this can last up to short and long time depending on the intensity of the violence. Females are more likely to face violence than males (Kenny, 2001). The victims of violence have low self-esteem, lack of attention, social isolation, and lack of motivation. Teacher and students should be equipped with gender sensitive knowledge to maintain a gender based equilibrium. They should be aware of the 'good touch and bad touch' (Gibson & Leitenberg, 2000). Gender sensitive environment should be created by forging a positive gender based ideology in the minds of the individuals (Meyer, 2008).

5. Conclusion

Gender equality can be achieved through two affective ways i.e. Transformation or Empowerment. It is the need of an hour to underline the importance and necessity of the genders to have a rational, strong and progressive social vacuum (Nayak, 2014).

Education is pre-dominantly aimed to empower people with the rational thinking. The prime facia of providing education is to build a society, which is free from any discrimination. The roots of gender based discrimination are embedded in the Indian society since ages, due to several reasons.

Institution like schools, colleges, vocational centres should promote gender sensitivity to remove biasedness against the genders. The research paper constraints that only major aspects are studied. Few other aspects like, influence of family, peer-pressure, financial background and others are ignored. Future research can be conducted to analyse the effect of these factors on teachers and students.

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