

Strategies to develop pedagogic materials to promote gender sensitization in higher education

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Abstract: Gender equality education is sometimes misunderstood by teachers as just providing equal educational chances for pupils or directly teaching gender equality consciousness. Gender equality education, on the other hand, should be understood as incorporating the experiences and needs of all students into educational practises and, eventually, empowering them to overcome traditional gender constructs through education, rather than simply eliminating gender discrimination, which may be inherent in educational practises. As a result, education, which is designed to emancipate people, has the opposite effect by fostering tunnel vision among pupils. The purpose of this tunnel vision is to benefit the privileged while discrediting minority people. If society is serious about closing the gender gap, it is necessary to review some common misconceptions about men and women. Social institutions, in general, and educational institutions, in particular, must play their proper roles in this regard.

Keywords: Gender Equality, Educational Practices, Teachers, Pedagogic, teaching-learning process.

Introduction:

Teachers play an important role in the teaching-learning process, as they are responsible for the main social, attitudinal, emotional, and psychological changes that occur in students. They have the ability to shape students' worldviews, thus it is critical that they are prepared to handle global and local issues in the classroom. Teacher education programmes must allow for involvement with current Indian society's challenges and concerns, such as gender, third gender, and gender equity. Despite the fact that teachers are viewed as critical change agents in the fight against inequality through education, gender is often overlooked in first teacher education programmes. Gender equity in education is dependent on how and what gender norms are manifested in the classroom and conveyed by teachers through pedagogical practises, not just on children's access to school.

The current study focuses on the curriculum and pedagogical methods of the teacher training programme. The goal of the study is to learn how teacher educators interpret gender concepts and associated ideas, as well as to investigate their perspectives of gender issues in education and how those beliefs translate into classroom procedures. Gender concerns have been incorporated into teacher education curriculum and pedagogical techniques in pre-service teacher education programmes, and teacher educators and teacher trainees have been questioned about this. The study's main goal is to look into teacher educators' viewpoints, pedagogical practises, and readiness to address gender issues. The study also aims to learn about the perspectives of administrators who work in teacher education programmes on how gender issues are addressed in pre-service teacher education programmes.

The current chapter begins with an introduction to the study, followed by a backdrop to the study, which looks at teacher education programmes in India, gender, and the emergence of gender sensitization awareness. In the current situation, this section also highlights India's main international commitments and legal provisions on gender equality. The following parts discuss the research problem, objectives, and research questions, as well as the study's significance.

Teacher educators and gender equity:

Those who are learning to teach now will be in charge of instructing the next two generations. If we want an India where girls and boys are treated with respect and kindness, and where both girls and boys are encouraged and expected to achieve their full potential, we must begin teaching about gender equality as an academic discourse in our teacher education programmes.

To participate in today's global discussion on education systems, it is necessary to recognise and describe the critical role performed by teachers. Teachers' lack of expertise or bias might filter misinformation and constrained learning behaviours that children internalise. The layers of unfairness woven throughout India's social fabric are well-known, and both professors and students bring this up in class. Language, caste, religion, gender, culture, and customs, as well as their underlying prejudices, are passed down from generation to generation. Gender equity is a critical topic in which all instructors must be educated.

Teachers, despite being frontline participants and important to high-quality education, frequently form a quiet majority, being excluded not just from policy-making, governance, and management, but also from day-to-day teaching practises and decision-making. However, meaningful and empowering teacher education is critical if attempts to eradicate gender bias and promote gender parity are to succeed. Teachers must develop into engaged, fulfilled, and empowered professionals. If normative change is to be achieved, the educational system as a whole must be reorganised to allow all actors to participate more democratically.

As a result, in this environment, teacher preparation, particularly for those who work directly with students, is critical. They must be provided with knowledge and skills that enable them to gain a better understanding of circumstances from a gender viewpoint and to take efforts to solve gender issues. Gender sensitization training helps teachers become more aware of gender issues and give them the tools they need to comprehend the unique learning needs of both sexes. It helps teachers design and use gender-responsive teaching and learning materials, lesson plans, classroom interaction, and strategies to eliminate gender bias and discrimination, and it trains teachers in the design and use of gender-responsive teaching and learning materials, lesson plans, classroom interaction,

and strategies to eliminate gender bias and discrimination.

Key International comments on education and gender:

Countries have worked together for more than 50 years through the United Nations, the Commonwealth, and other multinational groups to draught formal accords aimed at ending poverty, protecting human rights, and eliminating discrimination based on gender and other distinctions.

The creation of key treaties on worldwide efforts to prevent gender discrimination has taken place. Most countries have joined these international conventions to demonstrate their commitment to working toward a time when men, women, boys, and girls are no longer impoverished in any way and are able to live happy lives based on their own needs and aspirations.

These predicted advantages will not be realised until gender concerns in education are addressed. Gender equality is widely recognised as critical to ensuring that all people's human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected, as well as that large discrepancies in access to basic needs and future prospects be narrowed.

Statement of the problem :

Education is a powerful tool for bringing about change on a personal and social level, as well as a crucial tool for reducing disparities across social groups and genders. While teachers are crucial players in carrying out this fundamental duty of education, they are also raised in gender-segregated society. Teachers serve as transmitters of their societies' values and cultural conventions, and they have a tendency to encourage pupils' beliefs and behaviours. Sexist stereotypes influence students' educational and professional decisions, contributing to inequity. It is critical to include gender sensitization and awareness building in teacher education programmes. Teachers' roles in schools have been noticed to be important for training youngsters who would develop a gender-equal society in the twenty-first century. This exemplifies the educational perspective of a gender-equal society. Despite the fact that teachers are recognised as critical agents of change in the fight against inequality via education, gender is often overlooked in teacher education programmes. The purpose of this study is to see if teacher education is doing enough to prepare teachers to be gender fair and equality agents in the educational systems they will be entering.

Research methodology :

The current study was conducted in the mixed methods tradition to investigate gender concerns in teacher education courses and pedagogical practises. Following the evolution of first quantitative and then qualitative research (Tashakkori & Teddie, 2003a, p.5), the mixed method study has been dubbed the "third methodological movement" and the "third research paradigm" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.15). Mixed methods research is described as research in which the investigator uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methodologies in a single study to gather and analyse data, integrate findings, and draw inferences.

Sample and sampling procedure :

Purposive sampling was chosen as the method for the investigation. The fundamental goal of purposive sampling is for researchers to determine who can supply the greatest information to meet the study's goals. The sample was chosen for a specific reason, as its name implies. Purposive sampling is used to find persons with in-depth knowledge of specific issues, whether as a result of their professional function, skill, or experience.

- No: of Teacher Educators" 36
- No: of Teacher Trainees" 178
- No: of Administrators 6

Results and discussions :

The authors employed metrics of sample adequacy, such as Bartlett's test of sphericity, and correlation between variables, such as Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values, to see if the data was suitable for principal component analysis. The data's KMO measure is 0.935, which is described as "amazing", and the Bartlett Test was significant at p 0.01, indicating that the items are sufficiently connected. These findings backed up the use of factor analysis in the examination of acquired data.

Table-1: KMO AND BARLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin The measure of Sampling Adequacy	Chi-square	Df	P-value
.933	3.40	154	.000

Table 1 shows the teacher educators' responses to the question of whether the curriculum offers relevant information on gender and associated words. According to the statistics collected, 63.9 percent (23) of teacher educators agreed with the assertion. However, 25% (9) of respondents disagreed, and 11.1 percent (4) were undecided.

Table – 2 THE CURRICULUM INCLUDES RELEVANT INFORMATION ON GENDER RELATED TERMS LIKE

GENDER EQUITY, GENDER EQUALITY, AND GENDER BIAS

Calculation	Item 1			Total
	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	
Count	9	4	23	36
%	25	11.1	63.9	100

Teachers pedagogical practices :

In the second section of the questionnaire, statements are used to address a number of concerns linked to pedagogical approaches used by teacher educators. The teacher educators were asked to select one of five options for each item from a list of five (strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, strongly agree).

The majority of teacher educators (72.2 percent) responded affirmatively to Item No.-2, "I as a teacher educator interconnect gender, caste, and class inequalities." However, 19.5 percent of educators said that in their pedagogy methods, they did not connect gender, caste, and class injustice. In addition, 8.3 percent of educators were unsure on the subject.

Table – 3: I AS A TEACHER EDUCATOR INTERCONNECTS GENDER, CASTE AND CLASS INEQUITY

Calculation	Item 2			Total
	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	
Count	7	3	26	36
%	19.5	8.3	72.2	100

The overall reaction to item -3, "As a teacher educator, I provide equal assistance to all genders in classroom interaction," was highly good. According to the research, 91.6 percent of instructors say they provide equal support to students of both genders in the classroom, while 5.6 percent disagree. Approximately 2.8 percent of educators said they were undecided on the issue.

Table – 4: I AS A TEACHER EDUCATOR PROVIDE EQUAL SUPPORT TO ALL GENDERS TO PARTICIPATE IN CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Calculation	Item 3			Total
	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	
Count	2	1	33	36
%	5.6	2.8	91.6	100

Item -4 looked at whether "as a teacher educator, I provide examples and activities in the classroom that represent the experiences and interests of people of all genders." This response also shows a favourable bias, as 94.5 percent of educators agreed with the statement, while only 5.6 percent disagreed. Another noteworthy feature is that no respondents were uncertain on the subject.

Table – 5 : I AS A TEACHER EDUCATOR FURNISH EXAMPLES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASS WHICH REFLECT EXPERIENCES AND INTERESTS OF ALL GENDERS

Calculation	Item- 4			Total
	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	
Count	2	0	34	36
%	5.6	0	94.5	100

The second topic in this domain was with whether or not teacher educators use gender-sensitive language. As a result, the statement "As a teacher educator, I assure the use of gender-sensitive language" was chosen to elicit a response from the respondents. According to the survey, 58.3% of educators agreed with the statement, while 11.1 percent disagreed. More than a quarter of the educators (30.6 percent) indicated that they were undecided.

Table – 6 I AS A TEACHER EDUCATOR ENSURE USE OF GENDER-SENSITIVE LANGUAGE

Calculation	Item -5			Total
	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	
Count	4	11	21	36
%	11.1	30.6	58.3	100

Item No.-5 investigated if "as a teacher educator, I address cognitive and affective domains from a gender viewpoint." According to the survey, 77.8 percent of educators agreed with the assertion, while 13.9 percent disagreed. Around 8.3% of educators said they were undecided on the subject.

When asked (item no. 6) if "both genders require equal chances and access to higher education," an overwhelming majority of 97.1

percent agreed. Only 1.2 percent of respondents disagreed, while 1.7 percent were undecided on the topic.

Table – 7 : ALL GENDERS REQUIRE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Calculation		Item 6			Total
		Disagree	Undecided	Agree	
	Count	2	3	173	178
	%	1.2	1.7	97.1	100

Table 8: NAMING OF FACTORS/DIMENSION

FactorNo.	ItemNo.	Factorloading	Item Description	Name of Dimension
F1	18	0.730	Demonstrates values and attitudes that promote gender equality and sensitivity.	Teacher's values & attitude
	1	0.57	Uses language and expressions that are gender-sensitive.	
	6	0.425	Emphasizes student attitudes and values that foster respect and tolerance for everyone.	
	9	0.666	Ensures that the content of the course syllabus and other instructional materials include values and attitudes that promote gender equality and sensitivity	
	4	0.712	Actively encourages students to engage in activities that promote gender equality and sensitivity.	
	2	0.499	Shows genuine respect for the gender preferences of the students.	
	12	0.548	Integrates some principles of gender equality and sensitivity in class discussion.	
	15	0.529	Utilizes gender-neutral language and representation as a criterion for learning evaluation.	
F2	10	0.641	Designs a classroom seating arrangement that enables equal student participation.	Teacher's practices and strategies
	11	0.533	Employs cooperative learning activities and other teaching strategies that promote equal and active participation among students regardless of gender.	
	13	0.669	Uses objective criteria in the evaluation of student performance.	
	8	0.647	Gives enough time for students to think before calling on them to answer or speak.	
	17	0.427	Manifests ability to prevent and deal with gender inequality issues in class.	
F3	14	0.159	Holds equal academic and behavioral expectations of all students regardless of gender.	Gender Equality
	16	0.546	Provides equal praise, punishment, and other disciplinary measures to all students regardless of gender.	
	7	0.699	Provides students with equal opportunities for class participation regardless of their gender.	
	3	0.669	Accepts and treats all students in class without biases, especially in terms of gender.	
	5	0.532	Creates a classroom environment that supports equal opportunities for all students regardless of gender.	

Factor 1: TEACHER'S VALUES AND ATTITUDES

According to the rotated matrix, this factor has the largest explained variation of 19.675%. This component was significantly influenced by eight of the eighteen variables. This element or concept is referred to as "teachers values and attitudes" by the authors. The highest factor loading of .730, item 18 (Demonstrates beliefs and attitudes that promote gender equality and sensitivity), accurately summarises the descriptions of the other variables placed on this factor. The name of this component, which refers to teachers' attitudes, values, and beliefs concerning gender equality and sensitivity, is supported by items 1, 6, and 9, which all had high factor loadings. A gender-sensitive teacher exhibits principles and attitudes that support gender equality. This is reflected in the teacher's words and facial emotions. As a result, it may be claimed that this aspect is more inherent to the teachers, as it contains their beliefs and ideals. If they are naturally gender sensitive, it will show in both what they say and what they do. Similarly, gender-biased teachers utilise phrases and expressions that do not promote respect and gender tolerance.

Factor 2: TEACHER'S PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES

This component had the second greatest explained variance of 17.999 percent, with five of the eighteen factors loading on considerably. The authors dubbed this component "teachers practises and strategies" since all five items loaded on it discuss this construct, which is concerned with the teacher's teaching techniques and practises that promote gender sensitivity and equality. A gender-sensitive teacher creates a seating arrangement in the classroom that allows for equal student engagement (Item 10) and uses teaching-learning practises that encourage active and balanced participation among students of all genders (Item 11). These are just two examples of the various things a teacher might do in class to promote gender awareness. Many aspects of education in general, such as curriculum development and subject inclusion, instructional material design, and assessment, can be carefully created or adjusted to promote gender equality and sensitivity.

Factor 3: GENDER EQUALITY

This factor included five variables with an explained variation of 17.242 percent. This characteristic was dubbed "gender equality" by the researchers, emphasising the significance of every instructor treating all students fairly and equally, regardless of gender. The indications for the third dimension (items 14, 16, 7, and 5) might be discussed in the second factor, or the indicator for the first factor, item number 3. This dimension, however, should be viewed as important as the other two since it underlines the importance of fostering respect and promoting gender equality in all aspects and processes of teaching and learning. It's worth noting that the concept of equality is expressly emphasised in all five items placed on this component, namely: shares the same academic and behavioural expectations... (item 14), which includes equal quantities of praise, punishment, and other disciplinary measures... (item 16), ensures that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in class... (item 7) embraces and treats all pupils equally in class... (item 3) and fosters a climate in the classroom that promotes equal chances for all students, regardless of gender (item 5). This simply serves to emphasise the importance of this construct in assessing gender sensitivity in the classroom. Assess the items. The coefficient alphas for each factor were calculated using Cronbach's alpha as the final statistical analysis for the data.

Conclusion:

The educational system does not operate in a vacuum from the society in which it is embedded. Caste, economic position, and gender relations that characterise Indian society have a significant impact on students' access to education and involvement in educational institutions. Gender is one of the fundamental hierarchies preserved and promoted in educational institutions. In this setting, the function of the teacher is critical in the educational system. This emphasises the significance of teacher education programmes. Teacher education programmes are critical in developing and moulding the habits, manners, and, most importantly, the character of teacher candidates in order for them to become effective teachers. Pre-service teachers, or today's students and tomorrow's instructors, who are not free of gender bias will instil it in their students, deliberately or unintentionally. As a result, it is critical that teacher education programmes develop gender-sensitive teacher candidates and instil in them the ideals of gender equality and human rights. The current study was undertaken in this environment to learn more about the viewpoints, readiness, and pedagogical practises of teacher educators who prepare future teachers. The study's findings show that all major stakeholders, including teacher trainees, teacher educators, and administrators, saw the inclusion of a gender component in the teacher education programme as a positive development. All three parties, however, agreed that substantial assistance is required for the successful implementation of such innovative projects.

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