

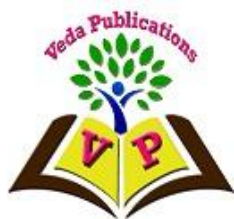
THE ROLE OF GENDER INCLUSION IN INDIAN TEXTBOOKS

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ABSTRACT



Education is of paramount importance and encapsulates the power to form one's worldview from an early age. It is used as a tool for forming socio political identities in subtle ways and children often grow up learning power equations and functioning of the society through books in way which is naturalised, leaving no room for it to be questioned. The Gender Analysis of primary school NCERT textbooks -18 of them – shows men mainly in a variety of professions and women as homemakers, teachers, nurses and doctors. Apart from conveying the basic knowledge in a particular subject matter, textbooks directly or indirectly affect and tend to influence a child's upbringing by "transmitting models of social behaviour, norms and values" which are considered as acceptable and appropriate (UNESCO, 2009). The issue is important keeping in mind the central role played by the textbooks in the Indian education system. As the message delivered by the content of the textbooks shapes the opinions of the students in a subtle manner. Inclusive content in terms of gender will lead towards the development of the aware citizen where equality is celebrated and gender specific supremacy is deterred. The research paper aims to investigate the gender inclusion in the textbooks used for teaching at the primary and secondary level in India. Men are often portrayed as strong character whomanoeuvre outdoor activities.They are depicted as the leader of the family, and frequently appeared to be brutal, fat or sluggish. Ladies, then again, are bound inside, appeared to be capable just at residential tasks. They are the essential parental figures of their youngsters, and anticipated as meagre, feeble, and kind. The main objective of this research paper is to see if textbooks promote gender equality, what sort of messages were passed on through these narratives; how ladies and young girls are spoken to; and the utilisation of a gender sensitive language.

Customarily, India has dependably been a male centric culture where ladies are commanded and constrained by male individuals from the general public as uncovered by the historical backdrop of the nation. In education, the need to make the educational programs gender inclusive gained currency during the 70's. The Indian Government has found a way to advance correspondence in the field of education. For instance, the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 accentuated on the disposal of a wide range of discriminations based on gender.

For the purpose of this research, two English Textbooks *Blossoms* and *Honeydrew* have been reviewed where various aspects of these books have been scrutinised to understand the nature of the ideology which has been implied while curating textbooks which have been deemed acceptable for influencing young minds. The analysis is split up into several categories which take various aspects of gender representation into account. These aspects may seem minuscule and unexceptional or insignificant but are of paramount importance because subtle undertones of a larger ideological play can be detected in these accounts. In these paper the primary question of understanding what are the different gender representations in these textbooks will be attempted. The language and images used in the textbooks will also be analysed.

It was noticed that for both the textbooks, the Textbook Selection Committee constituted of both males and females all the choice of selection of the texts was predominantly male authors. Whether the process of filtering female authors was intentional or not the unequal representation of female authors not only effects the literary and academic spaces but also filters a narrative which is capable of offering a different worldview. As posited by Virginia Woolf, an androgynous mind is more open and accepting to the circumstances of its surroundings. The discoveries demonstrate that the percentage of male characters (46% and 42%) outshine the female and nonpartisan characters. The clarification can be founded on the point of view of the writers using their creative freedom to articulate stories on their own terms with and forceful addition of female or nonpartisan characters in every story can impede the

innovativeness and creative opportunity of the writers in issues of story line and plot. In any case, it very well may be contended, that the Selection Committee ought to know that consideration of stories depicting female characters will assist students to understand female voices, in a male dominated culture and for female voices to have an equal portrayal in the public eye. Indian culture is changing and the role of women in the general public is changing as well, yet in reading materials such as these textbooks, which assume a major role in the education sector, these progressions are not referenced by any means. Along these lines, introducing students to these narratives is of paramount importance and should begin at a primary level itself where reading materials are more inclusive and gender sensitive.

The topics that are taken into focus are male centric as well. The main focus of the characters in the story is evidently the male characters around which the entire narrative revolves. This could be inferred from the fact that the stories that are chosen in these textbooks are written by male authors. What can also be taken into accounts the fact that most of these texts are taken frequently from western social orders, this maybe impacts the significance of male roles over that of females amid those periods and focuses for the most part on deeds, hardships, undertakings and voyages of male characters rather than females or nonpartisan characters. The depiction of the female characters in traditional jobs additionally mirrors the same.

A positive advancement towards guaranteeing uniformity between two sexes is to speak about men in unpredictable jobs and non-verbal communication like being apprehensive or stressing and so on which is apparent in the discoveries of the readings. However to the extent ladies are concerned, no positive changes can be seen, subsequently demonstrating a need to reexamine the manner in which ladies are spoken to in the reading material.

Men are depicted wearing a wide scope of garments from easygoing to formal notwithstanding mountaineering gears and jumping gears, though ladies are limited to customary and traditional outfits

with just a single occurrence of work wear. This is on the grounds that a large portion of the accounts depict men in an assortment of character jobs while ladies are displayed in customary and traditionally patriarchal roles. The information demonstrates that males enjoy jobs which are higher in status like Prime Minister, Soldier, Doctor, Knight than those assigned to the female characters. The employments doled out to nonpartisan characters additionally demonstrate a wide assortment of jobs extending from high to low status work yet for females, the jobs are customary, and generally confined to sustaining and minding occupations like instructors, tutor and so forth.

Textbooks verifiably pass on thoughts and ideas about the social standards and qualities which get exchanged to the brains of the students as the exemplification of adequate and suitable sexual orientation and roles assigned to genders in a given society. So as to avoid such issues, the educators should be aware about the materials, particularly, the course books and the thoughts and convictions installed in that which get passed on to the students. One arrangement is to incorporate gender free materials however this may keep the students from getting a charge out of different canonical stories or scholarly magnum opuses.

Even though India is a traditionally patriarchal society, this idea can be changed if the legislature applies more exertion to exterminate diverse difficulties to make the general public as gender inclusive as could be allowed. The depiction of stereotypical ideas and pictures about the gendered roles and obligations in the two course books contemplated in this examination won't kill the disparity that exists in all circles of Indian culture but instead fortify them. On the off chance that the course readings keep portraying people in regular jobs and exclude the third gender as a member of society and acceptable, the new ages of youthful students will keep on encouraging such biased ideas and thoughts about gender roles in the public eye which can be unsafe for humankind in the long run. In this way, it is fundamental to audit the present reading material utilized from the viewpoint of gender roles and incorporate and refresh the books

in order to guarantee that the present patterns in the general public are showed in that. On the off chance that positive changes are discovered reflected in the course readings, youthful students, who will in the long run turn into a piece of things to come social orders, will be taught with such positive ideas.

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