

Gender Differences in Textbooks: An Obstacle on the Road to Gender Equality in Society

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Abstract

In the present scenario, the aim of education is not only to impart knowledge to a group of students, but to illuminate the minds of diverse group of students and to help them in their holistic development. To realise this goal, education should be given to each and every child irrespective of caste, creed, race and gender. Right to education can be achieved if there is gender equality. Gender equality is an important component of quality education. Furthermore, to increase the equality of access to education, it is essential that attitude of the teacher, instructional strategies and curriculum should be free from gender biases. Among all, the curriculum is the crux of the education. So, gender equality should be the part of the development of school curriculum. The curriculum is the strongest tool to transmit and transform the culture, values and beliefs of society to learners. As the curriculum is implemented through the textbooks and learning material the images of gender (male and female) is portrayed in textbooks will have impact on child's personality. A textbook should be learner-centred and nurture the minds of young people without strengthening stereotypes and gender biases. Unfortunately, characters of girls and women are under-represented in textbooks and curricula. Such type of gender bias is rife in textbooks around the world, and is undermining girls' motivation and achievement in schools. To empower the girls there is need to revisit gender concerns in education in a proactive manner. Promoting gender equality has become an important developmental agenda in the digitalized age. There is need for tools that can help monitor gendered representations when textbooks are being designed or evaluated.

Keywords: Gender, Gender equality, Gender biases, Gender Sterotypes.

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