



City Montessori School Model United Nations
Aliganj, 2019

UNCSW

2030 for all: Gender, Learning and Teaching in
primary and secondary education contexts

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings Delegates!

It is an honor to be serving as a part of the Executive Board of United Nations Commission on the Status of Women at CMS Aliganj Model United Nations from 13th -14th April, 2019. We hope to be a part of an enriching academic simulation and engage in a constructive discussion on Agenda 2030 for all: Gender, Learning and Teaching in Primary and Secondary Education Contexts.

The background guide shall only be an instrument of assistance to the delegates instead of being the sole basis for your research. The given list of topics is not exhaustive and it is not intended to be. The list is simply indicative of pressing issues and topics of concerns, which must be addressed and will give you a bird's eye view of the gist of the issue. The delegates are at full liberty to bring up any other relevant point for discussion. We understand that MUN conferences can be an overwhelming experience for first timers but it must be noted that our aspirations from the delegates is not how experienced or articulate they are. Rather, we want to see how he/she can respect disparities and differences of opinion, work around these, while extending their own foreign policy so that it includes more of comprehensive solutions without compromising their own stand and initiate consensus building.

New ideas are by their very nature disruptive, but far less disruptive than a world set against the backdrop of gender stereotypes and regional instability due to which reform is essential in order to integrate gender perspectives in policy making and conflict resolution. Thus, we welcome fresh perspectives for intelligent management of human capital of this planet which shall finally shape the direction of this world.

We sincerely hope that the UNCSW of CMS Aliganj Model United Nations 2019 will help you gain experience to become better professionals and persons in future.

May the force be with you!

Regards,

Karishma Kharbanda

Chairperson

Avinash Nair

Vice Chairperson

BASIC SUGGESTIONS BEFORE YOU START RESEARCHING:

A few aspects that delegates should keep in mind while preparing:

Procedure: The purpose of putting in procedural rules in any committee is to ensure a more organized and efficient debate. The committee will follow the UNA-USA Rules of Procedure, a link for which has been provided in the last section of this Guide. Although the Executive Board shall be fairly strict with the Rules of Procedure, the discussion of agenda will be the main priority. So delegates are advised not to restrict their statements due to hesitation regarding procedure.

Foreign Policy: Following the foreign policy of one's country is the most important aspect of a Model UN Conference. This is what essentially differentiates a Model UN from other debating formats. To violate one's foreign policy without adequate reason is one of the worst mistakes a delegate can make.

Role of the Executive Board: The Executive Board is appointed to facilitate debate. The committee shall decide the direction and flow of debate. The delegates are the ones who constitute the committee and hence must be uninhibited while presenting their opinions/stance on any issue. However, the Executive Board may put forward questions and/or ask for clarifications at all points of time to further debate and test participants. A challenging, yet highly rewarding committee, involvement in the Global Peace Conference simulation offers an insight into the dynamics of international relations and politics. Lots of work will be required but as

previous participants in similar simulations ourselves, we promise you an exciting experience.

NATURE OF SOURCES/EVIDENCE:

This Background Guide is meant solely for research purposes and must not be cited as evidence to substantiate statements made during the conference. Evidence or proof for substantiating statements made during formal debate is acceptable from the following sources-

1. United Nations:

Documents and findings by the United Nations or any related UN body is held as a credible proof to support a claim or argument.

2. Multilateral Organizations:

Documents from international organizations like NATO, NAFTA, SAARC, BRICS, EU, ASEAN, OPEC, the International Criminal Court, etc may also be presented as credible source of information.

3. Government Reports:

These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that a report that is being denied by a certain country can still be accepted by the Executive Board as a credible piece of information.

4. News Sources:

(i) Reuters: Any Reuters article that clearly makes mention of the fact or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by a delegate in council.

(ii) State operated News Agencies: These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, may be denied by any other country in the council. Some

examples are – Novosti (Russian Federation), Xinhua News Agency (People's Republic of China), etc.

Note- Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India etc. be accepted. However, notwithstanding the aforementioned criteria for acceptance of sources and evidence, delegates are still free to quote/cite from any source as they deem fit as a part of their statements.

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), it was established by Council resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946.

The CSW is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

In 1996, ECOSOC in resolution 1996/6 expanded the Commission's mandate and decided that it should take a leading role in monitoring and reviewing progress and problems in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and in mainstreaming a gender perspective in UN activities. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, the Commission now also contributes to the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development so as to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women (ECOSOC resolution 2015/6).

During the Commission's annual two-week session, representatives of UN Member States, civil society organizations and UN entities gather at UN headquarters in New York. They discuss progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the key global policy document on

gender equality, and the 23rd special session of the General Assembly held in 2000 (Beijing+5), as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women. Member States agree on further actions to accelerate progress and promote women's enjoyment of their rights in political, economic and social fields. The outcomes and recommendations of each session are forwarded to ECOSOC for follow-up. UN Women supports all aspects of the Commission's work. The Entity also facilitates the participation of civil society representatives. ¹

METHODS OF WORK

The Commission adopts multi-year work programmes to appraise progress and make further recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the Platform for Action. These recommendations take the form of negotiated agreed conclusions on a priority theme. Under its current methods of work, established by ECOSOC resolution 2015/6, at each session the Commission:

- Holds a ministerial segment to reaffirm and strengthen political commitment to the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as well as their human rights and to ensure high-level engagement and the visibility of the deliberations of the Commission;
- Engages in general discussion on the status of gender equality, identifying goals attained, achievements made and efforts under way to close gaps and meet challenges in relation to the priority theme and the review theme;
- Considers one priority theme, based on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly and possible linkages to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Evaluates progress in implementing agreed conclusions from previous sessions as a review theme;

- Addresses emerging issues, trends, focus areas and new approaches to questions affecting the situation of women, that require timely consideration;
- Plays a catalytic role for gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system and contributes gender perspectives to the work of other intergovernmental processes and functional commissions;
- Considers in closed meeting the report of its Working Group on Communications;
- Agrees on further actions for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women by adopting agreed conclusions and resolutions; and

Sets aside time for the observation of International Women's Day on 8 March, when it falls within its session.

MANDATE

UNCSW has been in existence since 1946, preparing recommendations and reports to ECOSOC on promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields. Its mandate was expanded in 1987 to include the functions of promoting the objectives of equality, development and peace, monitoring the implementation of measures for the advancement of women, and reviewing and appraising progress made at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels.

Following the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women the General Assembly mandated the Commission to integrate into its program a follow-up process to the Conference, regularly reviewing the critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action and to develop its catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities.

In 1996, ECOSOC again modified the Commission's terms of reference (ECOSOC Resolution 1996/6) deciding that the Commission should;

- Assist ECOSOC in monitoring, reviewing and appraising progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at all levels, and should advise the Council thereon.

- Continue to ensure support for mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities and develop further its catalytic role in that regard in other areas.
- Identify issues where United Nations system-wide coordination needed to be improved in order to assist the Council in its coordination function.
- Identify emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that required consideration and make substantive recommendations thereon, and
- Maintain and enhance public awareness and support for the implementation of the Platform for Action

Reference for further information: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>

SIXTY-SECOND SESSION (2018)

The sixty-second session of the Commission took place from 12 to 23 March 2018. The Commission addressed as its priority theme ‘Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls’. In addition, it evaluated progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the forty-seventh session (2003) on ‘Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women’. The Commission also considered and made a recommendation on how best to utilize the year 2020, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, so as to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The ten-day session included a ministerial segment with round tables and other high-level interactive dialogues, a general discussion, as well as interactive and expert panel discussions. Stakeholders will organize many side events to draw attention to critical aspects of the work on gender equality.

Details are available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw62-2018>

AGENDA 2030 FOR ALL: GENDER, LEARNING AND TEACHING IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CONTEXTS

“Sitting in the same classroom, reading the same Textbook, listening to the same teacher, boys and girls receive very different educations.”

Gender is a social accumulation, which affects the society as a whole. Gender is not an issue of women only it is an issue of all the human being's. The prevalence of “Femininity” is not in solitude from Masculinity, i.e. they co-exist. These outlooks are correlative with one another, the interpretation and potential of one determines the interpretation and potential of the other. Gender alliances are neither “natural” nor given, they are fabricated to make inequitable associations seem “natural”, and can be assimilated only under the duress of socialization. These apprehensions lay an undue pressure on boys and girls to conduct oneself according to the traditional culture of masculinity and femininity. Girls get unjustified social injudicious, when they grow up in our society; the family and the society that specifies how they have to carry themselves draw specific boundaries. Boys too suffer from the stereotypes that exist in a patriarchal culture. They are intimidated by the communal norms from being sensitive, benevolent or petrified; they are shoved into the roles of income providers and guardians.

The elimination or eradication of poverty and progress towards sustainable development will only take place with increased and improved levels of education. Education is at the heart of any national development. The countries that have made the greatest progress in reducing poverty in recent years are those that have combined effective and equitable investment in education with sound economic policies. Education enables people to use and extend their capabilities, develop skills, improve their livelihoods and increase their earning potential. And it also empowers them to participate in decision-making and in the transformation of their lives and societies. Education is central to the achievement of greater equality in society, including between men and women.

Investment in education for both boys and girls has been shown consistently to be one of the most important determinants of development, with positive implications for all other measures of progress. It is no wonder that education of the both boys and girl child with a gender-based framework is widely acknowledged as being a single and most powerful vehicle of self-advancement and fulfillment of developmental outcomes for present and future generations of children. In a more specific way, education of the girl child is widely acknowledged as the foundation of national development and plays an important role in ensuring a safer, healthier, more environmentally sound world.

Investment in education for both boys and girls with a gender-based framework has been acknowledged consistently as being a single and most powerful vehicle of self advancement and fulfillment of developmental outcomes for present and future generations of children and the most important determinants of national development, with positive implications for all other measures of progress. Nevertheless, the main challenge has been to put the gender sensitive policies into practice in the school management, learning environment and implementation of the curriculum. Furthermore, deliberate efforts need to be put in place to move away from paying lip-service to gender issues and begin to act in a gender sensitive way at all levels from the policy makers all the way to the teacher in the classroom. While a lot of efforts have concentrated to primary level, there is need to serious come up with realistic and practical strategies for secondary and tertiary levels of education. It is very sad that the tertiary has been a bit slow in responding to gender imbalance and inequality. ²

The negative effects of gender violence in schools goes beyond low enrollment and retention rates, and for those girls who do stay in schools, the gender inequitable and unsafe environment results in a less effective and empowering education. On the other hand school-based interventions aim to address gender norms and equality early in life - at a developmental stage when gender identities are constructed and can be shaped/ reshaped - before gender stereotypes become deeply ingrained in youth.

MODERN DAY TEACHING

The concept of the modern-day teacher and the development of ideas such as 'teacher professionalism' have historically been gendered, often reflecting male paradigms and political theories. At the same time, there is a large body of research which shows that gender is a relevant variable which must be taken into account when explaining the functioning of classes and teacher-student interaction. The feminist alternative attempts to remove the gender determinism of political theory and the stereotypes of the 'rational and competent teacher', arguably laid down by the governments since, it is argued, they constitute a gendered model of both professionalism and the teacher. It aims to break away from a tradition which has considered the instructor as a rational and instrumental actor or agent who takes on a model of reason as the only true paradigm, in which masculinity and service to power play a fundamental role. In its place, a concept of the teacher is proposed that is more in accordance with social constructivism.

However, while steps are being taken to raise awareness of the gender factor in teaching and learning and although certain progress has been made, in practical terms, traditionally gendered views on instruction still lead to the undervaluing of the profession itself and even bring about a questionable gender-based distribution of teachers at certain academic levels. Furthermore, current trends in effectiveness and performance management in education appear to be remasculinising already gendered policies. As a number of authors suggest many elements employed both in the philosophy and within the very discourse of educational performance management are discriminatory. In Spain, legislative changes have introduced mechanisms aimed at removing gender bias, while at the same time instigating nation-wide programmes to enhance the quality of education based on performance management strategies previously employed in other EU countries. As mentioned, however, the nature of the latter has arguably contributed to a re-masculinisation of the teaching profession in other contexts. Thus, it is posited here that the possible benefits that may be obtained by these trends may be detrimental to those social aspects which educational administrations theoretically strive to offer, including that of gender equity. There are several important studies which prove that gender, on the part of both the teacher and the student, is a relevant variable that must be taken into account when explaining the functioning of classes and the types of interaction which occur therein. In many educational contexts gender stereotyping has been shown to exist not only among teachers and learners but also in the

elaboration of classroom materials, including textbooks and, more recently, in educational software for young children. As in other subject areas, the use of gender biased resources, which are often widely accepted by teachers, essentially leads to systematic and often unconscious perpetuation of the inappropriate treatment of gender in teaching and learning. It has been noted that unless appropriate steps are taken to raise awareness of practices such as gender stereotyping and, indeed, to rectify them, students are likely to reproduce them.

GENDER AND EDUCATION

According to official education statistics, female enrollment in the world is higher than male enrollment (although typically by a few percentage points) in 11 of 20 countries at the secondary school level, and in 12 of these countries at the tertiary education level (UNESCO, 2004). There continues, however, sizable clustering of men in engineering and technology fields and of women in the social sciences and education (Subirats, 1998), which reflects the different representations of women and men in society and their role in it.

Measures of human development that assess economic and social attainment indicate that women stand well below men. The Gender Development Index (GDI) developed by UNDP shows that in 2005 only 27 countries had a gap of less than 10 percent between men and women. The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), which assesses the level of political and economic power held by women, indicates that only one country (Norway) had a gap smaller than 10 percent between men and women, and that only 14 countries had a gap of less than 20 percent between them (UNDP, 2005). Furthermore, abundant evidence indicates that class, gender, and ethnicity combine to create substantial conditions of marginality.

Since governments equate sex (numerical representation of women and men) with gender, most governments wrongly assume that the region does not face a gender problem. Gender not seen as priority in educational plans other than to improve access in cases where serious disparities exist, as revealed by studies conducted in Costa and Peru. Some exceptions exist; a notable example is Brazil's recent efforts to modify the curriculum and improve the design of textbooks, which now contain

wording that reflects an accurate and expanded definition of gender in education. The translation of such principles into daily practices, however, will depend on the training and support that school administrators and teachers receive on gender issues.

In the field of gender studies, a tension exists between gender as equality and gender as difference, with proponents of the former seeking total equality between women and men, and those of the latter taking into account the special needs of women. Educationists have maintained that the attention to gender requires two aspects: redistribution, or the modification of access to material goods (the economic dimension), and recognition, or the addressing of symbolic and cultural injustices manifested in stereotyped representations of women (the cultural dimension). These dimensions are considered to a minimal degree in public policy in education. Gender appears often cursorily in the context of equality of opportunity, a response comprised of empty slogans since specific measures do not follow, or responses that seek ways to redefine gender so that it becomes applied only to women in vulnerable groups, such as rural and indigenous girls, rather than seeing gender as a phenomenon of social differentiation and arbitrary hierarchy that permeates society.

CMSMUN ALIGANJ

ADDRESSING STEREOTYPING AND VIOLENCE THROUGH EDUCATION

Education can reinforce gendered stereotypes, but it is also a place in which they can be challenged.

Norms and dominant ideas about appropriate roles and activities for men and women can be reflected in school curricula and learning materials, and in differential treatment of teachers towards girls and boys. In this way, education systems can perpetuate or reproduce existing gender stereotypes. Such stereotypes in education may be an important factor behind continued segregation in the labour market. Although rising numbers of girls are completing secondary education and passing exams, this has not led to the elimination of 'horizontal' segregation in the

labour market, and there is a tendency of men and women to pool in different sectors of employment, often with different levels of status, remuneration and security. According to the ILO, horizontal segregation was decreasing until the 1990s, but since then it has been rising again.³ Education plays a role in such trajectories; for example, in OECD countries, where gender parity in education has been achieved for several decades, 14% of young women entering higher education for the first time in 2012 chose science-related fields of study, compared to 39% of young men; moreover, girls are much less likely to consider a career in computing or engineering, and much more likely to consider working in health services. Rising levels of women's education has also not seemed to have an impact on the pattern of unpaid domestic and care work, with women performing a disproportionate share, leaving them less time, energy and access to resources such as education, food and healthcare.

However, school lessons that include critical reflection on norms around masculine and feminine roles can help to break down such stereotypes. For example, targeted initiatives can challenge gender stereotypes in relation to particular school subjects like science and maths.⁴ Also, school programmes that support students in examining their perceptions about gender can lead to a more equitable of domestic labour.

Even with a gender-equal, empowering education, women will still encounter gendered structures on entering the labour market; yet education can also give women the tools to negotiate these structures and challenge traditional gender roles to greater effect. Importantly, gendered stereotypes in turn also affect girls' educational opportunities, for example, through parental aspirations and expectations over domestic work, or through differential treatment at school. It must be realized that the targets for Sustainable Development Goal 5, 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'⁵, cannot be achieved without paying a detailed attention to gender equality in education.

UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY'S INFLUENCE ON EDUCATION

In precision, the community is an expanded social group having a noteworthy cultural and effective structure. The human beings are the building block of society. The framework of relationships between individuals is created based on our method of interaction, which in turn classifies the society according to the systems of traditions, values, and rules.

Education, implying it from a mainstream prospect, is any learning that we obtain from different media. Neither does education commence from the first day of formal schooling nor do the four walls of the room where an instructor promulgates his /her knowledge bind it. It commences from the very first instance of interaction with other people. It is an on-going process and it is not constrained to the boundaries of an institution. It goes beyond doubt that we grasp from anything we do, hear or see, i.e., we obtain knowledge from our surroundings.

Society plays a consequential role in education. The impact of the community can be either positive or negative on an individual. The values, morals, and principles of a community shall have an absolute impact in creating an education system that shall uphold the same values, morals, and principles. A social group that indulges in virtuous acts and decent interactions will induce its individuals to enlighten the other people.

However, there are certain unreasonable aspects of the society that creates despondent consequences on education. There are societies, which do not acknowledge women's right to education and discriminate against the women who wish to educate themselves. In defiance of this, men are also subjected to prejudice when they are desirous of entering certain disciplines of study that are believed to be dominated by women.

The interconnected relationship between society and education works both ways. While we are all aware of the influence education has on society, let's also analyze the influence of society on education. Education is directed by diverse societal features including conventions, culture, progress, traditions and

ideologies to a great extent. Education is not only the medium of acquiring wisdom for interpreting facts and figures but also imbibing the art of observation and gaining an insight by learning from those around us. In this viewpoint, the people who belong to the community play an integral part in educating an individual. Society encompasses our family, friends, relatives and the people who live in our neighborhood, city or even our country. We consider the state of people living in poverty-stricken societies as a specimen. In these impoverished societies, the scarcity of amenities has an adverse effect on people and impedes education. The children of such societies generally are unable to bear the cost of expensive books, computers, laboratories or practical assignments and may have to eke out a method of earning their own bread and butter for sustenance. In such societies, mere literacy is sometimes all that the people can manage.

Societal values also significantly influences education. It has been observed in numerous impoverished nations, where female emancipation and liberty is scarce, the prospect of education has been curbed or curtailed for virtually half the female population. This is majorly an outcome of the ignorance and prevalence of age-old beliefs and rituals. On the other hand, it has been noted that such gender-based contrasts are not existent in USA and many European countries. This illustrates how the rigidity of conventions and traditions established in some specific societies impacts the standards of education.

In developing countries like India, education is rebounded at various stages by the social evil of caste system. It is a commonplace phenomenon that the people who belong to 'higher' social classes are academically advanced, as compared to the backward sections that are deprived of education because the emphasis is on earning a livelihood by performing unskilled jobs rather than gaining knowledge as it is a matter of their subsistence.

Therefore, it can be validated that the society has a colossal impact on education. Vanquishing these inequalities is a challenge to everyone. It goes beyond doubt to affirm the belief systems of the society have an influence on education, but it is up to our prudence if we will allow society to have a dismissive impact not just on the pedagogical framework alone but also on the comprehensive development of an individual. We have to be mindful and vigilant in correcting illegitimate and unjust

ways so we can gradually mould the society into leaving an admirable footprint on knowledge.

Divergence between educating and socializing has been made a numerous times, yet on many occasions the two have also been regarded more or less as synonyms. Generally, the disparities consider socialization to be the procedure of preparing someone to be a proficient social representative within a specific community, and education to be something in extension to this, which might include being able to express analytically on the conventions prevalent in his/her community. Fundamentally, most of the contradictory factors between these two entities are assumptions -- though it has not been presented so bluntly-- that anything which may be termed as socializing that has the incitement of striking a common chord among the people and making them more similar, and the contrasting impulse in education, is to imbibe distinctive qualities in people making each person unique in their own way. (It is reckoned, that those considered as highly educated are "distinguished people"). However, it is determined by the person's interpretation of "society", whether one considers the distinction between community and education, essential to make or not. If a person's assumption of education encompasses all features related to the day to day lives of the community members, then education will likely be considered as a component of a more widespread socializing procedure or as a synonym for socialization. If one's perception of society includes predominantly a group of administrative, industrial, judicial, fiscal, lucrative transactions and a set of relationships generated by such a combination, yet the concept holds a well defined cultural discipline of knowledge, cognizance, and acknowledgement that provides specific contentment that surpasses the relationships and proceedings of particular societies at particular times, then a possibility of differentiating by categorizing "society" as "socialization" and the intellectual realm as "education."

In some instances, people who view education as entirely an instrument of social inception and who ultimately categorize individual refinement completely within the realms a social backdrop, tend to derive the conjecture that community's interference in regulating the rights and duties of the individuals' can make others distinctly apprehensive. It is noteworthy, that education is a quintessentially a social function, thus, the state cannot be indifferent to it. On the contrary, every detail that

concerns education must in some magnitude is asserted to its influence. Education is the ongoing process of evolution in social life. From this viewpoint, then, a society, which clearly distinguishes between educating and socializing, is a society in which the intellectuals shall be considered as 'educated' and the others, as 'socialized'. The outcome of this kind of observation has become a predictable phenomenon which is prevalent everywhere, i.e., the division of the community members into 'sophisticated' people and 'workers'. Instead of this, we should preferably elucidate the virtues of a truly democratic society, in such a manner, which incorporates all the attributes that anyone might wish to include in an ideal concept of education. Not only is social life identical with community interactions, but also all interactions (and hence all sincere social life) are informative.

Envisaging a perception of a repeatedly informative social ordeal, the yearning to differentiate socialization from education is intimidating, as it isolates the features of social commencement, which was John Dewey's (an educationist) primary concern to hold together. In theory, the thought of a well-defined procedure of education involves the perpetual danger that the material of formal directive will solely be the contents of the school's curriculum, this kind of subject matter will be secluded from the practical experiences of life. The idea of a distinct process of socialization leads to the peril of a restricted formulated strategy of vocational education to sustain the division between rich and poor. The methods of vanquishing these prospects of uncertainty were to link both formal instruction and vocational education to the existing reality of present social experience.

CURRICULUM AND GENDER

The curriculum is the essence of schooling and the education process. Time and again, the word curriculum has been applied in various aspects. It usually stands for:

- A school's written courses of study and other curriculum materials;
- The content of the subjects the students are taught;
- The courses offered in a school; and
- The totality of planned learning experiences offered to students in a school.

Curriculum is a blueprint of circumstances that have been designed for students. A curriculum is essentially an organized educational strategy. It has definite objectives and these objectives are derived from goals. These goals are again formulated at three levels, namely; ultimate (or long term) goals, mediate (or short term) goals and proximate (or immediate) goals.

Gender prejudice can occur within subject areas and school activities. For example, it has been observed that there are different participation structures for girls and boys in subjects such as mathematics and the sciences.

Gender bias propagates a delusion that boys are naturally better at mathematics and science than girls are. The general presumption is that if girls succeed in such subjects it is due to their hard work and perseverance, not their intellect, whereas if boys ace these subjects, it is attributed to their intrinsic skills. Fortunately, there are some indications that prejudice based on gender may be decreasing in some areas. The number of girls participating in science has escalated and achieved parity with boys in disciplines like biology, chemistry and algebra. However, subjects that are imperative for college majors such as engineering or physics are still predominated by males. According to statistics, roughly only 25% of high school students enrolled in physics are female. Besides, there has been negligible improvement in the percentage of women in engineering programs.

It has also been noted, that males are also more likely than females to be in remedial programs and students' racial background also has an influence on these patterns. For example, it is more probable that African American males to enroll in remedial reading and mathematics courses as compared to White males and their female peers. In addition, non-White students have a higher representation in vocational and non college preparatory courses than their White peers. Teachers have a pivotal role in stimulating the foundations of gender bias in schooling, but they also can be major benefactors to it as well, through their pedagogical practices, curriculum options, and assessment procedure.

PEDAGOGICAL CHOICES AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Teachers use gender reckoning as a means of maintaining classroom predominance. For example, it is a tendency of teachers to allot seats to students in such a manner that disobedient boys sit next to girls, as a scheme of classroom management. Further, teachers use the gender-based anticipation that the nurturing characteristics encompassed by girls shall lead them to prioritize the requirements of others before their own. In other words, teachers habitually expect girls to take on maternal and protective disposition, towards students who are behind schedule, with learning because of negligence, absenteeism through truancy, or in-school disciplinary procedures and ignorant behaviour, often those students are male.

Girls and boys have varied educative incidents in classrooms. Target students can have a control over lecture-style classes, but majority of and most scholars have a preference to learn in groups, by means of hands-on activities. It goes beyond doubt that group work can engage more students, but teachers must keep an eye on the medium of communication between students in those groups, ensuring participation of all students and guaranteeing that one student is not dictating the group. It has been observed, that students, especially girls, have an aversion to lectures, worksheets and tedious work assignments, they would rather study subjects and topics that they perceive as applicable to their lives. However, time and again, girls are consigned submissive roles not only in class but also in assessments based on accomplishments, while boys are allotted the tasks to make use of equipment and carry out the project, girls are supposed to announce the directives and document the outcome of the project.

Teachers usually would use girls as a civilizing impact on male students. Troublemaking boys are shifted to sit near or with girls to improve their behaviour. Yet, little thought is given to the impact of this strategy on the conduct and personality of the girls who are made to sit next to or near troublesome defaulters in the classroom. Instead of anticipating the boys to exhibit self-control and regulation, when teachers use this technique it highlights the stereotype that boys are unruly, whereas girls are helpful and obedient. It also implies that boys need upkeep, and the girls are cast in a motherly role to do just that.

Gender bias can also occur with the method and approach of assessments adopted by the teachers. For example, the primary format used frequently by teachers to evaluate assessments is multiple-choice questions. Girls are not persuaded to delve

into risk taking behaviours and often do not make a hunch on a multiple choice test, even if they are not penalized for incorrect answers. In light of this demeanor, the probability of girls completing multiple-choice exams is not as much as their male peers because if boys are unsure or do not know, they will take the risk and guess an answer. Nonetheless, when high-stakes tests use a wide range of question types, for example, short answer, problem solving, and multiple choice, often gender variations in student achievement cease to exist.

THE GENDER EQUITY GOALS IN EDUCATION AND IMPORTANCE

- Goal five of the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Goals (2000) calls for, “Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.”
- Millennium Development Goal (MDG) three is to “Promote gender equality and empower women,” and its Target four is: “Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.”
- **Sustainable Development Goal 4 states “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all” and Sustainable Development Goal 5 is: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” by 2030.**

The road to the fulfillment of these aspirations began at the EFA conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. This conference drew global attention as the need to achieve Universal Primary Education and eliminating the gender gap in education was discussed. By then, substantiated evidence was emerging about the abundance of benefits that would arise by educating girls. These advantages

encompassed not only the girl but also her folks, her prospective offspring, her society and the prosperity and welfare of her country. ⁶

EFFECTS OF GENDER BIAS

Gender prejudice can influence students' behaviour towards learning and their commitment with the subject. If affected by gender bias, girls are manipulated into thinking that any success they have achieved is because of their hard work and perseverance rather than any in born ability or prudence. Boys may be encouraged to accept as truth that success they achieve in science and mathematics is because of their gender. Overall, teachers have less faith in the academic accomplishments of girls compared to boys, and their outlook is evident by their attitude shown by them during student-teacher interaction. The nature and quality of reviews given by teachers to their students can also have an influence on students. The critique given by the teachers' on work done by girls is based on its appearance, but with the work done by boys, teachers evaluate the subject matter. Generally, girls do not receive factual comments or criticism from teachers, which they could enhance their prospects to become skilled. Girls also receive less time and attention from teachers than their male peers do when it comes to analyzing many hours spent in classrooms. Habitually, teachers ask girls simpler questions than they ask boys. Typically, girls are provided lesser prospects to get involved in classroom discussions make use of apparatus and assert their know-how in classrooms.

Gender bias in education is a series of micro inequities. Girls are persuaded and commended for compliant actions. Teachers, generally do not cross question girls and seldom inquire or put forward their disapproval for their work. It is up to the teachers to diminish and counter gender bias through an assessment of their educational training and by asking straightforward questions about their practices. For instance, with which students do they recurrently communicate? Are target pupils unmistakable in their classroom? If so, how do the teachers conduct themselves with those students? What is the modus operandi adopted by the teachers to involve the scholars? Does the teacher ask problematical questions to

girls as well as boys? Does the teacher exercise a range of pedagogical and evaluation producers? Which students are acquainted with the core curriculum?

Another approach of reducing gender prejudice would be for teachers to videotape their classes and assess their communications with the students. Alternatively, they could invite a colleague to observe their method of teaching and note not only which students are being asked questions but also the nature of questions. However, the educators must also be geared up for the repercussions of changing their methodologies. Girls have been conditioned in a manner that they do not cause regulatory issues if they do not receive the requisite attention of the teachers, and they do not habitually cause disciplinary problems, but boys can react negatively if they do not receive their fair share of attention, causing disruption to lessons and becoming stubborn. Moreover, inquiries have also shown that boys steer clear of written work and often have weak communication skills when asked to work in single gender groups.

However, the advantages in reducing gender bias in education may fade away with the prerequisites of high-stakes examinations necessitated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB). NCLB asserts that states should enlist academic accomplishment figures in most social groupings, except gender. This may result in less attention being placed on gender bias prevalent in educational practices and less statistical data that might divulge it. An on-going supervision of gender bias is essential to minimize its impact on students' opportunities for scholarship and achievement.

The research of gender bias in curriculum and in the teaching skills was mostly confined within the developed countries, but nowadays in developing countries and particularly in India research in gender bias is being initiated which is a healthy sign towards achieving gender equality. Gender bias is also taught entirely through the resources chosen for classroom use. The use of subject matter, which omits the contributions of women, which tokenize the experiences of women, or that stereotype gender role.

The essence of using Textbooks that requires teachers and learners to read and revise the text numerous times, may be a factor to the conditioning of the attitudes about personality, gender, professions, anticipations from life and life changing prospects. The children subconsciously imbibe what they read in the Textbooks and

what they listen from the teachers, as suitable attributes for what is manly and what is womanly. This kind of typecasting based on gender roles is not an element of the explicit curriculum but rather an apprehension of the concealed curriculum.

SUSTAINABILITY IN EDUCATION

SDG clause 4.7 refers to imparting education that ensures a sound understanding of sustainable development and related concepts.⁷ Given that sustainability will be one of the defining challenges of the 21st Century, making its importance as axiomatic to education as ‘technology learning’ was in the 20th Century. Our vast experience in engaging with issues in education and our more recent involvement in ecology has led us to realize that the problem of sustainable development is as much epistemic and cognitive as it is moral.

Sustainability is inherently trans-disciplinary at the points where the disciplines of ecology, biology, economics, complexity science, systems theory, behavioral sciences and applied engineering interplay in ever changing configurations. Our educational training does not prepare us to understand this well enough.

The current educational paradigm of linear, Cartesian thinking cannot help us understand the non-linear nature of feedback loops and cause-and-effect chains in natural ecosystems that typically cascade across time and space. Climate science is a good example of this syndrome.

Another example is our financial systems, which fail to value services provided by natural ecosystems. Even when they attempt to do so, they adopt an instrumental approach and use mechanistic valuation tools such as cost-benefit analysis and marginal utility value. [A well-known Nature paper from 1997](#) put the estimated value of ecosystem services at \$33 trillion, twice the global GDP in that year.⁸ While this seems pragmatic and reasonable, a normative approach would hesitate to put a value to an ecosystem service like pollination because there are no known alternate methods to make plants reproduce. Sustainability literacy is therefore

comprised of many different things coming together. Some cognitive approaches and tools for understanding complex issues include:

- The ability to understand the organizing principles of ‘living ecosystems’ and apply them to human communities (e.g. interdependence, flexibility, resilience, cyclical patterns).
- The concepts of stocks, flows, feedback loops, buffers and delays as applied to the ecological and social spaces that we live in.
- The trade-offs between efficiency, productivity, resilience, and stability.

We have spoken about the intellectual and cognitive deficit in our meager sustainability education, but what about the moral and psychological dimensions? In our minds, there is little doubt that the ethical and the cognitive must come together if we are to make some progress.

The ethical dimension is rooted in a holistic, integrated approach to everything around us – a valuable illustration of which is the ‘seventh generation outlook’ shared by many indigenous cultures. The spirit of this approach can be summarized in two sentences: “Tread softly on the earth so that future generations may live. Act only if you are sure that at least up to seven generations hence will not be affected by your actions.”

CONCLUSION

The Commission on the Status of Women reiterated time and again that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocols thereto, as well as other conventions and treaties, such as the relevant conventions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organization, provide a legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for the promotion of gender equality in education and employment.

Education is a human right, and that equal access to education, training and science and technology empowers women and girls in the context of global economic and

technological changes and promotes development, all human rights, human rights education and learning at all levels, as well as gender equality, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and the eradication of poverty.

The Commission has reaffirmed that the best interest of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his or her education and guidance in the exercise by the child of his or her rights and that responsibility lies in the first place with his or her parents or legal guardians. It must be understood that the expressions that educationalists use also provides an important illustration for students and the larger society. Word choices often indicate unconscious postulations about gender roles. As professionals, the content writers need to scrutinize the language to trim down or eradicate alternatives that suppress, typecast, or restrain others. The Commission also noted with concern the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to, retention in and completion of secondary and tertiary education and emphasizes the importance of technical and vocational training and lifelong learning opportunities and stressed that equal access to high quality and inclusive education contributes to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas.⁹

Mainstreaming a gender perspective in legislation, policies and programmes within all governmental sectors, including education, training, science and technology, academia, research institutions and research funding agencies, in order to address unequal access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work is the need of the hour and can be a stepping stone in the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals.