UNIT V

GENDER STUDIES: Knowledge: Through the Lens of Gender Point of View, Gender and the Structure of Knowledge. Who’s History? Questions for Historians and Others Reclaiming a Past, Writing other Histories.

CHAPTER 1 – Knowledge: Through The Lens Of Gender

Point of View:

People’s point of view usually has two meanings. It refers to a person (in a position) looking at what can be seen by him/her (being in that position). It also refers to that person’s interests. In other words, we choose to see the world in a manner that suits us best.

Domination often makes a person believe that they are doing things freely or on their own. Usually an elite/ male point of view is taken to be the truth and other points of view appear less true or even false.

What is a Gender Lens?

Think of a gender lens as putting on spectacles. Out of one lens of the spectacles, you see the participation, needs and realities of women. Out of the other lens, you see the participation, needs and realities of men. Your sight or vision is the combination of what each eye sees. Gender is about relationships between men and women. Gender equality is about equal valuing of women and men - of their similarities and their differences. We need equal, respectful partnerships between men and women to have happy, healthy families and communities in the same way that we need both eyes to see well. A gender lens can be many things. A form of gender lens that is gaining popularity is a tool that governments and NGOs can use in their regular operations. (e.g. A gender lens for training programs would be used every time you develop training. A gender lens for planning could be used for developing each annual work plan. A gender lens for research and surveying can be routinely used in data collection.)

Applying a gender lens to civic engagement programs and materials means that those making content and curriculum decisions view those programs and materials with particular attention to gender imbalances or biases in what is being presented. Using a gender lens reveals the ways in which content and approaches are gendered – informed by, shaped by, or biased toward men’s or women’s perspectives or experiences.

It is often useful to question the assumptions and observations implicit in textbooks and other classroom material that may present a gender bias. Too often, history, political, and civic education courses reflect the prevailing gender power dynamics that have historically favored men and masculinity, perhaps even rendering women’s perspectives and experiences invisible.

decisions view those programs and materials with particular attention to gender imbalances or biases in what is being presented. Using a gender lens reveals the ways in which content and approaches are gendered – informed by, shaped by, or biased toward men’s or women’s perspectives or experiences.

It is often useful to question the assumptions and observations implicit in textbooks and other classroom material that may present a gender bias. Too often, history, political, and civic education courses reflect the prevailing gender power dynamics that have historically favored men and masculinity, perhaps even rendering women’s perspectives and experiences invisible.

Some Well-known Gender Sensitive Scholars:

Bhikkuni Mutta, Ismat Chughtai, Chindu Yellamma, Mahalaqa Bai Chanda, Sarojini Naidu

CHAPTER 2 – Whose History: Questions For Historians And Others

Women held high status and position in Ancient times. In later ages, her status deteriorated. Evidently, a majority of the women still do not enjoy equal status.

Women’s position in the family very much depends upon the level of their education. Higher the level of her education, greater equality she enjoys in the family.

It appears that Indian woman is still not treated at par with man in social and family life. The educated women even today though earning, are in acquiescence with the doctrine of the male domination. The education may have made them economically independent, but they still lack the needed self-confidence.

The reason seems to be that they have been brought up under the old cultural atmosphere and they have not been able to shake off its influence even after the acquisition of modern education.

However, in our times, her role has changed. Society has started recognizing her contribution. There is need for complete equality among men and women. She has all the rights to command equal status with men.