



Gender equality among college teacher: Hyderabad Karnataka backward region

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Abstract

The seventh largest country in the world by geographical area and the most powerful democracy in the world, India, continues to be a strongly gendered society. Women are largely conditioned to evaluate themselves by certain fixed ideas about what it means to be a woman in a nation where they are expected to provide for the wellbeing of the family of their top most priority. Although India is a signatory to conventions and commitments ensuring gender equality, in practice, gender is one of the most universal form of social discriminations in its highly patriarchal social set up. Now, is a key moment though, when woman's educational achievements and professional aspirations are intersecting with traditional gendered roles.

Keywords: gender equality discrimination, education

Introduction

In India along with secretarial practice and nursing teaching is one of the three occupations with the highest proportion of women. It can be asserted that Indian women, despite all challenges have made inroads in all fields of academia as advocates for, and catalysts of change. India has 44.83 percent of female teachers at school level as per DISE 2010-11. Unfortunately, gender wise data is not available for college teachers, but it is established that in general and technical higher education, men far outnumber women.

With the advent of industrialization and technological change and consequent dependence on professional skills, professions have come to occupy an important place in modern line and modernizing societies. Professionalisation in the occupational field is spreading rapidly and number of occupations aspiring to professional status is also increasing. Through the expansion and application of knowledge, the twentieth century has seen a proliferation of professions. This professionalisation of work or the intellectualization and rationalization of work has not only vastly increased the proportion of people who are professionals in a modern society, but has also given them a central position in the conduct of government, business, and industry and organized religion.

The seventh largest country in the world by geographical area and the most powerful democracy in the world, India, continues to be a strongly gendered society. Women are largely conditioned to evaluate themselves by certain fixed ideas about what it means to be a woman in a nation where they are expected to provide for the well being of the family as their topmost priority. Although India is a signatory to conventions and commitments ensuring gender equality, in practice, gender is one of the most universal forms of social discriminations in its highly patriarchal social set up. Now, is a key moment though, when women's educational achievements and professional aspirations are intersecting with traditional gendered roles. In India along with secretarial

practice and nursing, teaching is one of the three occupations with the highest proportion of women. It can be asserted that Indian women, despite all challenges have made inroads in all fields of academia as advocates for, and catalysts of change. India has 44.83 percent of female teachers at school level as per DISE 2010-11. Unfortunately, gender wise data is not available for college teachers, but it is established that in general and technical Higher Education, men far outnumber women. In India gender entrenchments which stem out of society's perceptions on biological differences create expectations that circumscribe the teaching profession too, at subtle and perceived levels. Gender segregation is an indication that in many cases gender patterns present obstacles in the free choice of a career. Men and women modify their behaviour to fit into their expected category because tenacious cultural and power structures are at work consciously and unconsciously. The importance of gender is evident in the following words:

Gender is one of the most important categories if not the most important category, in human social life. Though at first sight distinguishing between female and male may seem straight – forward, a closer look readily reveals that this fundamental categorization is fairly complex- it is imbued with a host of cultural meanings and practices pervading each and every aspect of individual, inter- personal, group and societal processes.

Gender Equality

The concept gender equality is based on the idea of providing equal opportunities to both men and women that is avoiding discrimination on the basis of gender. In the Convention on Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women which was adopted by the UN general assembly in 1979, discrimination is defined as 'as any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital

status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other filed’.

Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development (Nieva and Gitek, 1981). Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and their society. Council of Europe (2004) defines gender equality as accepting and valuing equally the difference between women and men and the diverse roles they play in society. Gender equality includes the right to be different. Gender equality means discussing how it is possible to go further, to change the structures in society which contribute to maintaining the unequal power relationship between men and women, and to reach better balance in the various female and male values and priorities. It implies real partnership between men and women and their shared responsibilities in removing balances in public and private life. It is a question of using the competence, skills and talents of each and every citizen, of involving both women and men in building society, solving problems and preparing the future. Society, in order to develop, is dependent on the utilization of all human resources, and both women and men must participate fully to meet the different needs of society.

Gender and Teaching

Gender equality assumes greater importance in the context of a quasi-traditional or transitional society like India. Different gender-expectations, scripts, schemas for the two sexes mark the Indian culture. This gender-role orientation has far reaching impacts and links with career related issues. For instance, in patriarchal social set up, it is often the husband’s location that determines where the family will reside. From a young stage at school, girls and boys receive clues and messages that emphasize rather than challenge the prevailing gendered stratification. Much in love with their teaching profession, most teachers believe that their being women has helped them to be more compassionate, accommodating and approachable to their students. When it comes to handling primary school children, they relate to them without hesitation. Communication with middle and high school students also becomes easy for women teachers as they share their anxieties well with the mother figure in a female teacher. Some respondents believed that women teachers are unable to deal with senior class boys. Another observation was that there is a difference in the level of commitment of school and college teachers as the teachers at school level usually take up teaching to spend time in something constructive only when their husbands are on postings; „it is just not 100% effort. The proverbial fire in the belly is missing.

Job Satisfaction

Core dimensions of work that provide quality enhancement include variety, identity, affirmation, autonomy and positive feedback that lead to raised performance levels. Job satisfaction is the favorableness or un-favorableness with

which employees view their work. Job satisfaction contributes to life satisfaction and it is important to know what exactly the determinants of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction are for women teachers in India.

To a very great extent the determinants of job satisfaction are the same in both sexes except that women require more assurance of security at workplace. Appropriate monetary compensation, freedom and flexibility of schedule at work place, opportunities to grow professionally and personally, acknowledgements of creative genius, and appreciation of effort contribute to women’s satisfaction. When asked about verbalising work-related woes, most teachers believed that this portrays them as unprofessional workers, unable to handle pressure. Consequently, they often do not express openly because they fear getting labeled as aggressive. Our respondents reported that despite freedom of speech women are not vocal for fear of being opposed.

Conclusion

The fairer sex is seeking a fairer world to work in. With determination, commitment, negotiation and adjustments many women are reconstructing their identity by challenging internalised gender hegemonic norms. Attitudes like “girls should behave like this” and “boys should behave like this” disrupt a harmonious social order. With this awareness, educated Indian women have begun to root out gender hierarchies, viewing men as useful associates in the building of a healthier socio-academic ethos. In a subcontinent marked with alarming diversities in terms of context and variables, it is not easy to draw generalisations. As pioneers who can dare to defy social injustice, many iconic teachers are climbing their way to success not in spite of but because of being women, but they are far outnumbered by those who work with a passive acceptance that their gender places them at a disadvantage. The present gender disparity in the teaching profession in India cannot be seen in isolation from global realities. Borrowing policy boosters from other nations can help. We have drawn attention to this theme to carry forward and not conclude an ongoing debate on a subject of deep individual and social interest touching in its scope our personal, professional, private and collective interests.

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