An Attempt of Gender Sensitizing Through Analysis of School Text Books

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Abstract Textbooks are the source of information which not only develop the ability to read and write but they also encourage for critical thinking, independence and creativity. The textual material that is developed for the school-going children is of paramount importance in education. It is the textbook that they are exposed to in the class room, and the teacher conveys its meaning and interpretation, while embossing his / her own ideas on the minds of children, who are yet in the formative stage. This is one of the earliest and most important influences on the young, growing minds. Therefore to have a gender equality in the society, one must built the allocation of role in its earlier stage of life. (Amruthraj RM)

2. “Objectives and Methodology of the study”
This paper seeks to explore the text books of social science and tried to know if stereotypes or gender bias still exists, as it is also one of the hidden obstacles on the road to gender equality in education. The paper is divided into two main parts, one is to see whether gender bias still occurs in textbooks and the other part of the paper tries to provide a gender sensitizing element in implementing the text. It tries to have a visual and content analysis of social science text book. It tries to have a visual and content analysis of social science text book. The method used for conducting the study is an analytical method. Secondary source of information has been used from the text book and other relevant documents.

3. “Review of literature”
Amruthraj R.M has studied the English language text books taught in Government primary schools in Tamil Nadu through a gender sensitive perspective. It is quite clear from the analysis of the text books that despite an explicit policy of gender sensitization of school curriculum, gender stereotypes and gender bias still exists. It points to the need of preparing gender sensitive text book material based on feminist knowledge base. Gender bias in textbooks: a hidden obstacle on the road to gender equality in education By Rae Lesser Blumberg, 2007 studied about the text books of different countries and said textbooks form a gender role and talks on discrimination shown in text books. It also provides necessary recommendation of it. Sadia Jabeen, Abdul Qayyum Choudhary, Sonia Omar, 2014 has studied on Gender discrimination in curriculum a reflection from Punjab text book Board and concluded that, the literature reflects male showvanism whereas female's role seems to be limited when it is compared with male. Kaisa Saarikivi, 2012 had a studied on Gender Representation in the Finnish EFL Textbook Series the News Headlines and Smart Moves. The aim of this study is to critically examine from the gender perspective a recent EFL textbook series that has
been published for teaching grades 7-9 in the Finnish comprehensive school, Smart Moves, and to compare it with a textbook series that was published ten years earlier for the same purpose, The News Headlines. Results found that, The News Headlines and Smart Moves both include many clearly gendered characters who are distinguished from each other in the way they look, what they are interested in and the way they act. In addition to difference between genders, there still seems to be a slight male dominance in the world of the textbooks. There is a clear imbalance between gender in the amount of characters in The News Headlines. In Smart Moves the imbalance is not so drastic but there is still a male majority. Male characters also have more powerful occupations and the male voice is more often the narrator than the female voice. Dr. Moly Kuruvilla1, Thasniya K.T.2, 2015 had studied on Gender Stereotypism in the Pictorial Depictions of Primary School Text Books and results of the study show that there is an under-representation of females, denigration of women’s roles and role models, male centeredness, gendering of skills and spaces and private/public dichotomization in the pictures of these textbooks.

4. “Findings and analysis”

1. Title of the Text book – Understanding Economic Development
2. Class – X
3. Subject – social science
4. Language - English
5. Publication team:
   5.1 Head Publication officer – male
   5.2 Chief Production officer – male
   5.3 Chief Editor – male
   5.5 Editor - male
   5.6 Production officer – male
6. Text book development committee
   6.1 No of male: 8
   6.2 No of Female: 3
7. Month and Year of Publication – November, 2013
8. Total No. of pages – 92
9. Total No. of lessons – 5
10. Publisher full address – NCERT, Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110016

From the above it can be seen that editorial board did not show gender equality.

This book of economics is divided into five chapters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>pg no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Development</td>
<td>2-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Sectors of Indian Economy</td>
<td>18-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Money and Credit</td>
<td>38-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Globalization and the Indian Economy</td>
<td>54-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Consumer Rights</td>
<td>74-90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. “Analysis of Economics textbook”

Chapter 1 Development

This chapter mainly gives an understanding about development and provides with some indicators of development. The Positive view of this chapter is that there is no stereotyping language used in this chapter. The negative view of this chapter include the page no 2nd of this chapter that provides a table where students had to fill the development goals of different categories of person. Here it is find that makers of the text books has a pre conception mind about the women’s position in a urban rich family and rural poor family. This can be understood by the following lines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of person</th>
<th>development goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A girl from a rich urban family</td>
<td>“the gets freedom at her brother and is able to decide what she wants to do in life she is able to persue her studies abroad”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above line, the students could easily form an attitude towards rural women and urban women’s position. Thus such kind of preconception notion should not be there in text books because this would create a negative attitude towards those people. Suggestion provided by the researcher is that instead of showing the development goals of urban women it must show about rural women as a sign of encouraging them. Again the students belongs to rural area would try to relate this with their own living and develop themselves as well as their surroundings.
Chapter ii: Sectors of Indian Economy

This chapter is mainly emphasis on the various sectors of economy and tried relate with the people’s lives. Positive view of this chapter depicts in the following line: “But I should be paid the full value of the wheat that I produce!” This line depicts the labour of women and she wants the full justice and pay for her work. Inequality in payment of work based on gender is a common concern which is very beautifully shown in this chapter. This chapter also shows the entrepreneurship quality of women which is really appreciating. While proceeding towards the chapter it is found two of the instances where a women shown as farmer and she lives on agriculture. It’s really good that it shows the independent character of women and gives an idea of economic empowerment. Suggestion that is given for this chapter is about economic empowerment where it has come that we should remove the figure of land lord as a ‘man’ and proposes women there because the land right is not available to all and still a problem in India. Though there is a land right provision but it is not implemented yet.

Chapter iii: Money and Credit

Positive view of this chapter includes that it provides about the information of loans that one take from bank. This chapter also talks about self help group which has become important economic development of women. No stereotyping language used in this chapter. Negative view of this chapter include that the 1st part of this chapter states about the barter system and the visuals provided here were male. Thus this shows that economy of earlier times is controlled by men. But here a question arises, whether the role of women during that time was really zero or the makers of the text books have no idea regarding this.

Chapter iv: Globalization and Indian Economics

This chapter gives the idea about the integration of various countries through trade and commerce. It tries to highlights the process of globalization and the role of MNCs. Positive view of this chapter include that there is no stereotyping language. Negative view include that the 1st part of the chapter is a description of multinational corporation (MNC), while proceeding towards the chapter the involvement of women in MNC is shown less. Suggestion that is given for this chapter includes today working in IT sector is a recent trend, so there should be inclusion of women’s achievement. The names of various women achievers in this sector should be visualized. Today most of the text book shows the visuals of women in all fields, but in this sector the involvement of them is very low. So the text books should provide an encouragement attitude to attract women in this field.

Chapter v: Consumer Right

This chapter mainly put its importance on the issues of consumer rights and sensitizes the people in the consumer movement. Positive view of this chapter include that this chapter provides necessary information of consumer right and tries to aware the individuals. This particular does not have any limitation except its visual part as there is limited number of women shown in text. Suggestion provided for this chapter that there must be inclusion of visuals of women in the text book.

6. “Analysis of history text book”

1. Title of the Text book – India and the Contemporary World II
2. Class – X
3. Subject – social science
4. Language – English
5. Publication team –
   5.1 Head Publication officer – male
   5.2 Chief Production officer – male
   5.3 Chief Editor – male
   5.4 Editor - male
   5.5 Production officer – male
6. Text book development committee
   6.1 No. of male- 7
   6.2 No. of female- 7
7. Month and Year of Publication – November 2013
8. Total No. of pages – 200
9. Total No. of lessons – 8
10. Publisher full address – NCERT, Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110016

From the above it can be seen that there is gender equality present in the editorial board.

History book of social science is divided into three sections
Section-I: Events and Process
pg no- 3-53
Chapter I- The Rise of Nationalism in Europe
Chapter ii- The Nationalist Movement in Indo-China
Chapter iii- Nationalism in India
Section II: Livelihoods, Economics, and Societies
pg no- 77-127
Chapter iv- The Making of a Global World
Chapter v- The Age of Industrialization
Chapter vi- Work, Life and Leisure
Section III: Everyday Life, culture and politics
pg no- 153-177
Chapter vii- Print Culture and the Modern World
Chapter viii-Novels, Society and History

Analysis
Chapter 1 -The rise of nationalism in Europe
Positive view of this chapter includes there is no stereotype language used in this chapter. Towards the second part of this chapter there was a mention of women's position during the making of nationalism. It is really good that the development of this text books gave an overview to the students how was the position of women during that time. One of the best parts of this chapter is that it contains various questions in each page which gives the students to bring out their own creative skills. Suggestion that has been provided was for the makers that they could have mention about the 1st phrase of feminism and provide some information about the movement of demanding equal political right and some contribution of women.

Chapter ii-The nationalist movement in Indo China:
This chapter has a Positive view as there is no stereotype of language. One of the gender friendly part shown in this chapter was that in the paragraph 2nd page no 36, " Resistance in school'. Here a Vietnam girl protest and refuse to the principal of the school when she was told to offer her front seat to a French student. This phase shows a courageous behavior of women which is not possible to seen earlier as women during that time were not literate enough to protest for something. In the part 7th of this chapter "the nation and its Heroes” there was a small paragraph in the beginning which states about the role of women in Anti imperialist movement in Vietnam. Such kind of writings in the text encourages gender equality. There was hardly any women’s contribution in the movement is highlighted in the text which is really discouraging.

Chapter III: Nationalism in India:
Positive view of this chapter discusses about nationalism in India and there is no evidence of stereotyping language used in this chapter. Negative view of this chapter includes One of the disappointing features was that hardly a woman was projected in formation of nation building. In every phrase of independence women had always played a great role but the projection of them was very less. In the visuals of dandi March women in various movements were not included by the makers of this text book. In the part IV of this chapter women were projected as motherhood character but bold character of women should have been projected in this chapter. Suggestion that can be provided here is that a time has come where the makers of the text books should put some emphasis on the contribution of women in nationalism though some the visuals in the chapters were of women but that is not enough. Women have played an important role in nationalism which should be highlighted.

Chapter IV: The Making of a global world
Positive view of this chapter includes towards the 3rd part or this chapter the visuals depicts the condition of women during war time. It’s really appreciating that the condition of women during that time has given somewhat importance. There is no stereotyping language used and it can be said as gender neutral. Negative view deals with the visuals that are used in this chapter are not clear. Suggestion that can be given here are a limited number of contributions shown by women in the phrase of industrialization especially in industrial growth and some more can be included.

Chapter V: The age of Industrialization
Positive view of this chapter includes that there is no stereotyping language used and it can be said as gender neutral. Negative view of the chapter was that the visuals are not clear so it creates difficulty for the students to relate with the writings. Suggestion that can be given here are a limited number of contributions shown by women in the phrase of industrialization especially in industrial growth and some more can be included.

Chapter vii: Print culture and the modern world
This particular chapter can be said gender friendly as it provides woman contribution in print culture as per a man that is very rare to see. Positive view
of this chapter that it r mention about women and their contribution towards print culture.

7. “Conclusion”

In the concluding part it can be said that the makers of the text should put some effort to provide information regarding women’s contribution in nationalism. This is the only area where the role of women is still missing. It can be said that Gender sensitive material in the text books should be prepared on the basis of feminist knowledge base and it has been seen that the editorial board does not represent gender equality and for which feminist knowledge base is not visible. Without this knowledge-base, those who were given charge of rewriting textbooks will restrict themselves to their limited thinking. One of the disappointing elements of the text is its visuals which are not clear. The makers of the text books must put equal emphasis on writing and in the visuals too because visuals are the medium where the students can imagine themselves in such role. Thus visual helps in the formation of role and hence the quality of the visuals should be clear. From the analysis it can be said that there are few chapters which are gender bias but most of the chapters in both the text either history or economic is gender friendly. The necessary suggestion has been provided along with the analysis of the chapter that is gender biased. Thus it is clear from the above analysis that though the makers of the text book followed the principles of national curriculum framework but still they have to work in this regard.

8. “Acknowledgement”

The author would like to thank Indraneel Bharadwaj, a student of Don Bosco High School Guwahati, Assam for providing the text books of social science to conduct the study.

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