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A STUDY ON LEVEL OF GENDER EQUALITY AWARENESS AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN KASARAGOD

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Abstract: The objective of the study was to find out the level of gender equality awareness among higher secondary students in Kasaragod. The study was an exploratory and descriptive design. Purposive random sampling technique was selected. Qualitative analysis was done. From the study it was found out that (a) maximum students i.e., 90% were at the higher level of awareness only in the basic concept about gender (b) under the criteria- causes for gender inequality maximum students were at the moderate level of awareness (c) maximum students under the criteria- programmes for gender equality in India were at the lower level of awareness (d) all the students i.e., 100% were at the lower level of awareness under the criteria- programmes for gender equality at international level (e) under the criteria- constitutional rights for women in India, maximum students i.e., above 90% were at the lower level of awareness and No students were at the higher level of awareness (f) under the criteria- women empowerment maximum students i.e., above 86% were at the lower level and no students were there at the higher level of awareness. It can be concluded that maximum higher secondary students in Kasaragod are having very lower level of gender equality awareness. It is suggested that Teachers, Parents and all the stake holders should make a conscious effort to create gender equality awareness among the higher secondary students. So that no individual should be deprived of their rights.

Keywords: Level of Gender Equality Awareness (LGEA), Higher Secondary Students (HSS).

Introduction: Gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity) (UNESCO, 2003).

Whereas Gender Equality means, 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. 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 (UNESCO, 2003).

From the Indian context, spiritually, women were respected. But in certain Indian society, male dominating society exists. Hence women were deprived of their rights. Resulted in gender

inequality. Hence many rules and regulations passed in India to promote gender equality. Under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India passed several Schemes for achieving gender Equality such as **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)**, **Scheme for Adolescent Girls**, **National Nutrition Mission (NNM)**, **Mahila e-Haat**, **One Stop Centres (OSCs)**, **Ujjawala** and so on.

In other countries like Brazil, Germany and French Community of Belgium eradicate stereotypes based on gender in the textbook. The Department of Education of Alberta, Canada, the United States Department of Education, Washington and Alaska emphasis to promote gender equality in school and Sweden offers gender-awareness training to teachers.

Equality is a rights of every individual. How far the students are aware of their rights? It is very important to know their awareness. There are no studies conducted especially in a backward district like Kasaragod. Hence the investigator is interested to conduct a study on the level of gender equality awareness among Higher Secondary Students in Kasaragod.

Methodology of the Study:

Research design: Exploratory and Descriptive Study.

Research questions of the study: What is the level of gender equality awareness among Higher Secondary Students in Kasaragod?

Population of the study: There are around 65 Higher Secondary Schools with 9871 students in Kasaragod constitute the population of the study.

Sample of the study: One thousand students studying in the Higher Secondary Schools in Kasaragod constitute the sample of the study.

Sampling Technique: Purposive random sampling technique.

Tool and technique of the study: The following table. 1 include variable, sources of data, method of data collection and tool used.

Table 1: Tool and Technique of the Study

Variable	Informant/ source of data	Method of data collection	Tool used
Level of gender equality awareness among higher secondary students	Higher secondary students	Questioning	Level of Gender Equality Awareness among Higher Secondary Students- A Questionnaire developed by the investigator

Description of the Tool: The tool was developed by the investigator. The tool consists of 6 criteria with 5 questions each. Hence the total number of questions in the tool was 30. It was a Multiple Choice type of questions. 'One' mark for each question.

Procedure of Data Collection: The tool was distributed to the HSS. They were asked to choose the correct answer. Thirty minutes of duration was given. After that time, questionnaire were collected by the investigator.

Analysis of Data: A qualitative analysis was done in the study. For each correct answer one mark and for each incorrect answer zero mark was allotted. Students who scored 1 to 10 were considered as 'Lower LGEA', 11 to 20 - 'Moderate LGEA', and 21 to 30 - 'Higher LGEA'.

Result and Discussion of the Study: The result and discussion of the study are as follows,

Table 2: LGEA among HSS under the Criteria- Concept of Gender Equality

Sl No.	Questions	% of Students		
		Higher LGEA	Moderate LGEA	Lower LGEA
1.	What is Gender?	90%	10%	-
2.	What is gender equality?	8%	75%	17%
3.	What is stereotype?	20%	20%	60%
4.	What is gender equality according to UNICEF?	5%	15%	80%
5.	Difference between gender equality and gender equity.	5%	15%	80%

It can be noticed from the above table.3 that maximum students i.e., 90% were at the higher level of awareness only in the basic concept about gender. Whereas, maximum students 60% to 80% were at the lower level of Awareness under the criteria concept of gender equality.

Table 3: LGEA among HSS under the Criteria- Causes for Gender Inequality

Sl No.	Questions	% of Students		
		Higher LGEA	Moderate LGEA	Lower LGEA
1.	Patriarchy society is a ...	10%	60%	30%
2.	UNDP measures...	-	5%	95%
3.	What type of occupational inequality noted in India?	17%	78%	5%
4.	According to International Standard Birth Sex ratio implies...	2%	40%	58%
5.	Effect of gender inequality...	14%	68%	18%

It can be noticed from the above table.3 that maximum students under the criteria- causes for gender inequality were at the moderate level of awareness.

Table 4: LGEA among HSS under the Criteria- Programmes for Gender Equality in India

Sl No.	Questions	% of Students		
		Higher LGEA	Moderate LGEA	Lower LGEA
1.	Which scheme in India emphasis on self-development and empowerment of adolescents girls?	-	10%	90%
2.	Scheme for combating trafficking also known as...	-	10%	90%
3.	Aim of Bati Bachao Bati Padhao	50%	40%	10%

4.	What is One Stop Center?	-	10%	80%
5.	Which plan emphasis on empowering women entrepreneur?	-	10%	90%

It can be noticed from the above table.4 that maximum students under the criteria- programmes for gender equality in India were at the lower level of awareness. On the maximum questions, no students were at the higher LGEA. Koniari. E (2014) conducted a study on Gender Equality and found out that more teachers emphasize the need for promoting the idea of gender equality through education.

Table 5: LGEA among HSS under the Criteria- Programmes for Gender Equality at International Level

Sl No.	Questions	% of Students		
		Higher LGEA	Moderate LGEA	Lower LGEA
1.	What is CEDAW?	-	-	100%
2.	What is the objective of UN Women?	-	-	100%
3.	What is the goal under UN Millennium Development Goals?	-	-	100%
4.	Principle 2030 Agenda for Development is	-	-	100%
5.	What UNDP stands for?	-	-	100%

It can be noticed from the above table.5 that all students i.e., 100% were at the lower level of awareness under the criteria- programmes for gender equality at international level.

Table 6: LGEA among HSS under the Criteria- Constitutional Rights for Women in India

Sl No.	Questions	% of Students		
		Higher LGEA	Moderate LGEA	Lower LGEA
1.	What Hindu Succession Act of 1956 stress?	-	10%	90%
2.	When was Sexual Harassment for Women Act passed?	-	-	100%
3.	A landmark amendment for promoting political rights for women	-	6%	94%
4.	Which Article ensures to women the right to equality?	-	6%	94%
5.	What Article 15(1) specifies?	-	10%	90%

It can be noticed from the above table.6 that under the criteria- constitutional rights for women in India, maximum students i.e., above 90% were at the lower level of awareness and No students were at the higher level of awareness.

Table 7: LGEA among HSS under the Criteria- Women Empowerment

Sl No.	Questions	% of Students		
		Higher LGEA	Moderate LGEA	Lower LGEA
1.	Which commission protects and promotes interests of women in India?	-	9%	91%
2.	What is the objective of Awareness Generation Programmes?	-	14%	86%
3.	When was Nation Policy for Empowerment of women passed?	-	-	100%
4.	How GEM is calculated?	-	-	100%
5.	When India ratified CEDAW?	-	-	100%

It can be noticed from the above table.7 that under the criteria- women empowerment maximum students i.e., above 86% were at the lower level and no students were there at the higher level of awareness. The results of the study conducted by Saba Syed (2017) support promotion of education as a strategy for initiating a dialog on gender equity and violence within a school setting

Conclusion: From the study it was found out that (a) maximum students i.e., 90% were at the higher level of awareness only in the basic concept about gender (b) under the criteria- causes for gender inequality maximum students were at the moderate level of awareness (c) maximum students under the criteria- programmes for gender equality in India were at the lower level of awareness (d) all the students i.e., 100% were at the lower level of awareness under the criteria- programmes for gender equality at international level (e) under the criteria- constitutional rights for women in India, maximum students i.e., above 90% were at the lower level of awareness and No students were at the higher level of awareness (f) under the criteria- women empowerment maximum students i.e., above 86% were at the lower level and no students were there at the higher level of awareness.

It can be concluded that maximum HSS in Kasaragod are having very lower LGEA. It is suggested that Teachers, Parents and all the stake holders should make a conscious effort to create gender equality awareness among the HSS. So that no individual should be deprived of their rights.

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