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## Gender Concerns in School and Education

Shraddha Singh\*

Women and men are placed in bipolar categories by numerous institutions in our society. These institutions, through day-to-day practices embedded in long-standing beliefs, construct male and female subjects who face strong forces to conform. Family practices, religious myths, the social division of labor, the sexual division of labor, marriage customs, the educational system, and civil laws combine to produce hierarchies, internalized beliefs, and expectations that are constraining but at the same time 'naturalised' and thus seldom contested. It would be important to relook and analyze the gender content and to ascertain the manner in which it is addressed/not addressed in the educational system. On the basis of the analysis, curriculum changes would need to be brought about. Likewise it would be important to reorient the teachers on gender issues so that overall gender sensitization in the educational system could be brought about.

World Bank report (2012) on "Gender Equality and Development" examines how greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative. Markets, institutions, and households play a role in reducing inequality, and globalisation can provide important opportunities. Domestic actors need to focus on reducing female mortality, narrowing education and earnings disparities, increasing women's voice, and limiting gender inequality across generations. The international community needs to ensure consistent support, improve the availability of gender-disaggregated data, and extend partnerships beyond governments and development agencies.

These phenomena are part of the complex dynamic of gender, schooling and society, creating a range of interpretations of masculinity and femininity. As Connell (1994) states:

... gender is a pattern of social relations that exists at multiple levels in and around schools: in institutional patterns, in interpersonal relations, and in culture. Gender relations divide, positioning people and actions as masculine and

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