

## **Global Citizenship Education and Gender Depiction in Textbooks: The Case of Punjab Textbook Board's Pakistan Studies and Urdu Textbooks**

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### **Abstract**

*This research is focused on the case of gender depiction in textbooks of Punjab Textbook Board's Pakistan Studies and Urdu at Secondary and Higher Secondary School Level. A content analysis was done of Pakistan Studies and Urdu textbooks while keeping in view UNESCO's Global Citizenship Education (GCED) targets being given under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) target 4.7. The theme has been operationalized concerning learning objectives of "Education for Sustainable Development" (UNESCO, 2017) that centers around empowered and motivated learners being capable of critical thinking and to contribute towards a sustainable future. The findings of this research work highlighted the need for a clear focus on the content regarding women in textbooks.*

**Keywords:** Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Curriculum, Textbook

### **Introduction: Global Citizenship**

Nowadays people identify themselves as global citizens as they are part of a bigger community of the world enforced by the ideas of global engagement. Contemporary transportation, information, and communication technologies have made this concept of global identity more viable. Getting universal access to education is not enough— it is also necessary to give all students quality education that prepares them for this century. (Israel, 2012)

Global citizenship education is a concept that should be given consideration now. As humanity goes through ever more multifaceted and decisive challenges, it has become a very basic and important part of quality education in the current milieu. It should be kept in mind that access to such type of education is an issue of equality. Youth should be prepared to do meaningful work in the global economy regardless of their background and should also take part in resolving the global challenges that influence their lives and communities.

Broad-minded acceptance of perspective, traditions, and multiplicity comes through analysis. Critical thinking flourishes in an environment that allows students to search for novelty in information and perception through dynamic contribution with self-sufficient scholarship. An interdisciplinary idea with a two-way scholarship is the ingredient of preeminent practices. Student motivation via relevant and engaging content is important. Content should be studied while focusing on the reasoning skills and analysis. There should be the use of purposeful transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary inquisition with thought for greater queries; use of main resources in the world; as a very important part of the learning process, emphasize interacting with people around the world. (Stewart, 2009: 106)

For the period 2014-2020, Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is one of the main areas from UNESCO's Education related plans. According to which the countries should "ensure that all learners are provided with the knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development". (Global Citizenship Education, n.d.)

UNESCO's strategy for GCED is all-encompassing catering study materials and results, the science of teaching and learning in every type of setting. It is transformational while helping students

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to change themselves and the world, based upon values as upholding some universal values such as non-discrimination, equal opportunity, regard and exchange of ideas and still branch of a bigger community to hold up the quality and significance of education. (Global Citizenship Education, n.d.)

In a global world which is having many unresolved social, environmental, economic, and political challenges ahead, there is a dire need for such an educational system that will help in building up peaceful and sustainable societies. Educational systems worldwide cannot incorporate such transformative measures. Hence it is vital to make civil rights, harmony and social consciousness, sustainable development, health along with gender equality a center point for Education 2030. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and GCED can become instrumental for acquiring expertise, proficiencies, and mindsets required for having a conflict resolution approach first locally and then globally.

**a. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)Target 4.7**

"By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development." (unesdoc.unesco.org, 2016)

**b. The Global Indicator for SDG 4.7 and Pakistan**

"The extent to which Global Citizenship Education (GCED) including gender equality and human rights are mainstreamed at all levels in national education policies, curricula, teacher education, and student assessment." (unesdoc.unesco.org, 2016)

James Banks (2004) says that the purpose of citizenship education, "should be the development of reflective and clarified identification with own cultural communities, nation-states, and the global community. Students need to be able to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to act to make the nation and the world more democratic."

Education and other SDGs have a main linking cord between them i.e. target 4.7 as it caters to social, moral, and humanitarian aspects of education all at once. It also ensures that there is a systematic intervention in textbooks and teacher education programs via national curriculum frameworks and the moral, social, and global perspectives of education must be reflected. Target 4.7 's global indicators mainly focus on young people and children in an educational set up that is formal.

Education is selected as the main concern for getting the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG3) by the United Nations: "To promote gender equality and empower women". The goal is: "The elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and at all levels of education by 2015". Raison d'être for impartial gender-based approach in teaching and learning insists upon correct perception along with an expansion outlook. Education is considered a basic human right according to Article 26 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all based on merit". (Nations, 25 December 2008)

In South Asia especially in Pakistan, gender discrimination in education is very overt. (UNESCO, 2002). Keeping altogether contrasting views about gender constructs in Pakistan, Khalid (2011) differentiates between the ones that encourage marginalizing females and the others that want a balanced and independent position for females.

Pakistan is concerned about gender issues in access to education and the organization of schools. It has two categories of schools one is with male disciples and male instructors and the second is female disciples and female instructors. Usually, secondary education institutes in Pakistan are single-gender institutes and this is a preferred mode by parents. A very small number of private educational institutes have co-education at the secondary school level, some have separate sections for boys and girls even in the same class and some do not. As far as certain subjects are concerned, there is a big national gender gap due to the inability and non-availability of female teachers in those subjects which also pertains to the fact that female instructors have lesser qualification levels than their male counterparts (Warwick and Reimers, 1995). Current studies about female teaching and

learning in Pakistan demonstrate significant progress in having equality in gender in the educational sphere. But still certain disparities and the procedure are being quite slow as stated on the Ministry of Women's Development (Pakistan) website. (Ministry of Women's Development, 2010)

In Pakistan, "globalization could be defined as the movement of capital, labor, people, goods, knowledge, and ideas" (Green et al., 2007). Globalization came as a compulsion for Pakistan not as a choice (Yoganandan, 2010). Pakistan being a postcolonial state has a long and cumbersome history of colonization and imperialism and is still struggling to get rid of the residue of manipulation and power. There is a need for making citizens responsible. Since its inception, the policymakers in Pakistan take Education "to be nation-building, building of manpower and character. This has been seen repeatedly over time in the five-year plans put forth by various governments" (Bengali, 1999).

### c. **Overall Research Approach and Design**

The research work has a qualitative research framework having an Interpretative /Constructivist research paradigm. The strategy has been content analysis of the compulsory courses of Pakistan Studies and Urdu from the curriculums of Secondary School and Higher Secondary School (Punjab Textbook Board, Pakistan). A thematic analysis has been done, keeping the concept of gender equality mentioned in UNESCO's target 4.7 for Global Citizenship Education as the main theme.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze gender inequalities and gender stereotyping
2. To explore the depiction of only the positive roles of women in the characters of the idealized and exceptionally heroic women

### **Literature Review**

The globalized world offers many opportunities as well as challenges to the young. They should be given such education that will enable them to seek new opportunities and face challenges to make a congenial world with the type of education which supports their growth as global citizens. By participatory methods used in Global Citizenship Education, the learners know how decisions made in some other part of the world affect them and vice versa. Through Global Citizenship Education, students can take an active part in decision making and learning procedures.

The scale of Global Citizenship Education does not comprise of a single area or subject. It is about all areas of a curriculum and for learners of all ages. It is about all the areas offered in a school as it is a perception of the world given by an institute and it is evident not only through teaching and learning but also through the philosophy and culture of a school. (Oxfam 2006: 2)

Hillman says that international education, "emphasizes a supra-national view where the interdependence of nations is fundamental to global cooperation; it proposes a curriculum of international understanding necessary to achieve world peace." (Hillman 2007: 248)

Simultaneously, educational institutes have great power to cause revolution, alter gender dealings, increasing the variety of opportunities for both genders. (Ungei, 2012a)

Gender partiality can also be taught completely through the materials selected for teaching in the classroom. The use of materials that exclude the aid of females, knowledge, and skill of women, or typecast gender responsibilities, highlight gender predisposition in curricula and this should not be done. While research manifest that by using works suitable for both genders, learners tend to gain equitable and unbiased information. They have supple attitudes as regards gender roles, and copy actions shared in the resources. (Klein, 1985)

Gender consciousness problems remain a noteworthy part of communal impartiality in quality education no matter whether they are at the macro level of educational documents or the micro-level in a group of students. The decisive effort maintains the potential outreach while analyzing the problems related to societal impartiality, especially for gender impartiality in the field of education, whereas the concerns of reallocation and equity are essentially connected to greater societal and intellectual observations. The main ideas in this structure center on performance and potential, where performance becomes many things that a person does, and potential is what is feasible for that person. (Sen, 1999)

International Education tries to find out ways to incorporate learners internationally in a system being ruled by cultural diversity, stressing upon the need for such curricula and pedagogy that

helps in developing expertise, information base with an outlook important for performing efficiently as residents of the world. (Hill 2007: 257-8)

Gender equality is always made synonymous with the opportunities to access education on the part of females; the concept of Education for All (EFA) recognizes that gender equality holds an important part for quality in education (UNESCO, 2003). UNESCO's Institute of Statistics has developed certain indices to file and evaluate the development made in gender equality regarding accessibility and success in education. Global Monitoring Report issued by UNESCO says, "In South and West Asia there are 57 million more children in school in 2007 compared to the statistics of 1999. In 2007, the net enrolment ratio is 86% (upon 74% in 1999), the gender parity index is 0.96 (upon 0.84 in 1999). In 2007, there were an estimated 18 million children out of school, 58% of whom were girls, an improvement on figures for 1999 when there were 39 million children out of school, 63% of which were girls". (UNESCO, 2010)

Statistical measures used to show gender equality in education do have some representational issues as that doesn't show prejudices and disparities present in an educational environment that usually comprise of societal and cultural patterns of behavior and stereotypes associated with the idea of gender. As Aikman et al. (2005) maintains, suppositions for being suitable for a lad and suitable for a lass to study frequently destabilizes objectives of equity in the science of teaching. Conventional societies frequently support the male point of view. This should be highly understood that gender equality should be a part of education, for adding up value in it, and considered as a bigger communal set up to maintain a dialogism based communication among the outliers and the conventional powers where underlying suppositions can be confronted. (Unterhalter, 2005, p. 112)

#### **Gender Equality and Textbooks**

Gender-based stereotypes are very common in the textbooks despite the claims made by the governments regarding equal educational and job opportunities for women. With time, more females are coming in decisive roles in socio-political and financial spheres while working in the front line for the recognition of their rights, these textbooks define how women are perceived by the society, which not only shows a gap in state-related policies regarding women but also raises a lot of questions regarding the validity of these texts. After reading the under-discussion textbooks (with some exceptions), the most obvious points are these, firstly the people engaged in the making of textbooks do not take government policies regarding women on a serious level and consider them only rhetoric. Secondly, the patriarchal mindsets prevailing in the society are so strong that even policymakers and academics while working on these curriculums, do not realize and recognize a social order that takes men and women alike. Thirdly, very clear guidelines are needed for the content of textbooks regarding women representation. Fourthly, even when guidelines are given but the people involved in choosing and developing these texts fail to make the difference between a stereotypical or negative representation of gender, caste, or creed along with the effects that these stereotypes can have on impressionable young minds. Fifthly, the editors and writers of these texts are comfortable with these gender binaries and stereotypes as they have been doing it for years and become a matter of habit. Sixthly, the makers of these texts believe in preserving the status quo.

The theme of Gender Equality has been discussed under these three sub-themes:

- Gender Inequalities (girls having lower status)
- The Predisposition to show the constructive roles of females in the characters of the idealized and extraordinarily valiant women
- Gender Stereotyping (as women being largely depicted in motherly tasks, while the decision-makers and protectors are males)

#### **Discussion**

In Urdu Book of grade 9 (Punjab Textbook Board), there is a strong dearth of female characters. Only a few times females are mentioned in the whole book, one time on page three Hazrat Isma's name is mentioned, on page thirty-one an old lady is mentioned who is praying. In the story Panchayat by Munshi Prem Chand, some female characters are introduced but in secondary capacity shown as unintellectual and quarrelsome. An old woman is also shown as going from door to door for justice but experiences hesitation on the part of the members of society to stand against the main culprit as he is influential. He is shown as the provider for that woman. In the story Aram-o-Sakoon by Syed Imtiaz Ali Taj, the wife is shown as a noisy person who is not sensible enough as to how to make her

husband comfortable. And that is the only quality expected by her character in the story. Only the last story has a female as the main character who is decisive and has leadership qualities, who is helping others and sacrificing for the sake of others. The editors have not picked up the works of any female writer or poet for this book. In this context, this book is having zero representation of female writers and poets.

The female characters presented in this book are underrepresented in this book. First, there are very few of them. In the two stories Panchayat and Aram-o-Sakoon gender inequalities are quite evident as females are not given any decisive and definite status, they are presented as either quarreling or irritable. They are portrayed as mindless creatures who are used just as stock characters with no growth and no spark of intelligence.

Panchayat is a story written by Munshi Prem Chand. In this story, a weak old woman is shown who after being wronged by a male member of her family goes from door to door to seek justice and is refused help by many. While one of the female characters, the wife of Algu Chaudhary, gets beaten by her husband as a norm for speaking up what she thought in a situation. While the other story Aram-o-Sakoon is being written by Syed Imtiaz Ali Taj. In this story, a housewife is shown who while managing the household makes her sick husband more uncomfortable. She is shown as an ignorant woman who is not conscious of what comfort means and by making more noise she makes the environment of the house more uncomfortable for her husband so much so that eventually he has to go to his office to seek refuge. Till here gender inequality is highly evident from the choice of roles for women in this textbook.

Only the last story in this book has a woman as a central character who is decisive and has leadership qualities so much so that she sacrifices her house for the sake of helping people around her. She is helping others and sacrificing (an ideal state expected as of women). This last story is about an old lady, who is the daughter of a martyr, widow of a martyr, and mother of a martyr. This story has been written with the background of the Peshawar Army School Attack. This old lady has been shown as a valiant, decisive, and courageous leader who donates her house to spread awareness in masses against terrorism. She is shown as an ideal woman who after going through various ordeals of her life, gives away the remaining of her life for the safety of her society. This story is all about the predisposition to show the constructive roles of females in the characters of the idealized and extraordinarily valiant women where they are shown as superhumans and not as normal human beings with flaws and weaknesses.

While on the other hand, Urdu for 10<sup>th</sup> grade has a good representation of female writers and poets. It has many female-centric stories. The story "Mulamma" by Hajra Masroor, depicts a young girl who is trying to rise above the norms and rules of society but gets defeated by a human emotion i.e. to show oneself as better off to fellow humans. It is truly a depiction of a female with weaknesses and strengths. Not a superhero but a common normal human being who is affected by the monetary constraints and behavior of others around. Even the male characters represented in the stories of this book are essentially human possessing the flaws and foibles of any human being.

In the poetry section, a poem of Allama Iqbal which is upon a Muslim girl named Fatima Binte Abdullah is being added. She embraced martyrdom while giving water to the wounded in the war of Tarablus. In the poetry section, one ghazal is by Ada Jaffrey, a female poet. And last story is also by a female writer Shagufta Sagheer-ul- Hasnain Tirmizi. Both in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade Urdu textbooks, only one female is the member of the Review Committee of the book, rest are males.

Grade 11 Urdu book by Punjab textbook Board has just one female writer having a female in an important role, but this is all. Compared to this, grade 12 Urdu book although having one female writer, has a vast range of characters in which females are portrayed e.g. Akbari, Achan, Halawa, Hajan, and Begum Zaidi are some of the characters from the book. All these characters are round characters portrayed with the accuracy and having weaknesses that a common human being possesses.

In Pakistan Studies 9<sup>th</sup> grade textbook (Punjab Board), one of the authors is female. In chapter one "Ideological Basis of Pakistan", no female Muslim leader and her contribution to the cause of independence and ideology of Pakistan is mentioned. In chapter two "Making of Pakistan" nowhere is mentioned any role played by the females at that time in the making of Pakistan nor their contributions and sacrifices are acknowledged. In chapter four "History of Pakistan", nowhere the contribution of women is mentioned or acknowledged in the making of the constitution and the

running of the newly found state Pakistan. Only once Fatima Jinnah's name is mentioned in chapter four in the context of the 1965 Presidential Elections that she participated in them against Ayub Khan but nothing more. Chapter five is named "Protection of Women's Rights" in which Women's rights are explained according to Islam and the constitution of Pakistan. The services of Begum Rana Liaqat Ali Khan in making All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) are also mentioned. Under the heading Status and Rights of Women in Islam, many famous women from the history of Islam are also referred to e.g. Hazrat Hajra (AS), Hazrat Khadija (RAA), Hazrat Fatima (RAA), Hazrat Aisha (RAA), and Hazrat Zainab (RAA). But only their names are given and a detailed account of their services for Islam is seriously missing. Punjab Marriage Restraint Act 2015 and Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016 is also mentioned in this chapter, and implementation methods are also discussed for the understanding and enlightenment of the masses.

In Pakistan Studies 10<sup>th</sup> grade (Punjab Board), there is a good representation of women in the Book Review Committee. In Chapter six, "History of Pakistan II", the role of Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto as the very first female prime minister is discussed along with the measures taken by her government for women e.g. establishment of women police stations and courts along with social and health policies for women. The last chapter is named "Protection of Women" in which the legal, Islamic, social, and political status of women is discussed in detail. Moreover, the services of some prominent women leaders who contributed to the cause of Pakistan are also discussed. Pakistan Studies grade 12 book follows the theme of the non-inclusion of female leaders and decision-makers. From authors to editor, all representation is male. There is again just one chapter i.e. chapter ten named "Protection of Women" in which a woman's rights according to religion and legislature including a woman's right to work and workplace harassment are defined but in a brief way.

As can be deciphered from the study of Urdu books for Secondary and Higher Secondary Punjab Board, motherhood and being a good wife is the culminating point of a woman's life. Motherhood and wifedom are presented as a glorification and exaltation of womanhood, the only legitimate purpose that a woman should have. The females who refuse to do so, stand as outsiders from the society and hence have no representation in the textbooks. Through the discussions of the above-mentioned subjects' books, it is clear that as far as women representation is concerned, women are bound to stay within traditionally allocated roles and are allowed access to only the type of knowledge necessary for being a good mother and wife. This image stands contrary to UNESCO's global citizenship agenda where women are given equal opportunities and strengths. The image of females represented in these textbooks is quite contrary to the reality as more and more women are entering the fields hitherto only known to the males but this reality check did not affect the policymakers, book writers, and editors who are insistent upon producing texts based upon patriarchal myths that no longer exist. "A gender-based division of roles is woven into almost all the exercises and stories in these books, thus we have constant references to men performing active and/or heroic roles and women engaged in passive, often pointless activities" (Husain, 2005). This is also true for the Pakistan Studies books under study, "The fact that there Sultanate women like Razia Sultana who was not only the first woman ruler of Delhi Sultante but also the first to get the mandate of the people for her rule, Gulbadan Begum and Zebunnissa, both of them highly educated women, the former a biographer and the latter a poet and philosopher, is seldom acknowledged in our textbooks." (Hussain, 2005).

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that the textbooks used for this study from Urdu and Pakistan Studies curriculum are highly impressionable and are intended to give students an exposure to the contexts of national and religious identity, social relationships, and forbearance for helping them become enlightened citizens of the world. The content of these books (with only a few exceptions) is in favor of ideas that are unsuited for Pakistan's image as a developing and enlightened state committed to giving the same rights to females as are given to males. Clear milestones, attention to detail, and an independent approach is needed to address the UNESCO's SDG target 4.7 to give women equal opportunities and rights.

### **Recommendations**

There is a need for education reforms having a detailed plan of action which can include restructuring of the implementing bureaucracy and education decision-making. There should be clear-cut markers

to calculate the improvement and the trail of the development being made should be kept. This work suggests making basic reforms in the workings of the Ministry of Education, Curriculum Wing, and the Punjab Textbook Board along with changes in the books under discussion. Experienced and expert education management is needed. Citizen groups and private education providers should be used for developing new educational materials while giving choices of available materials along with the inclusion of more material related to gender equality.

### **Suggestions for Change**

Women representation needs to be changed. They should also be portrayed in decisive roles instead of being reduced to a motherly and wifely role which will give a more realistic view of these texts.

A woman's economically productive role needs to be emphasized more than her reproductive role.

A woman's unpaid services (domestic work) should not only be encouraged but lauded.

The works of low paid women i.e. maids, cooks, sweepers etc. should also be encouraged in the texts.

There should be the inclusion of famous female personalities in the textbooks e.g. Razia Sultana, Zebunnisa etc. Another example can be of women who were exceptional in sports or other works i.e. Maryam Mukhtiar, Arfa Karim etc. With these measures, the gender inequalities in our curriculum can be addressed.

The concepts of macho manhood or violent masculinity also need to be softened by including examples of famous men who adopted the professions or hobbies exclusive for women or by practically putting them into situations where their softer side comes out.

Gender biases are social constructions and by changing the stereotypes, global citizenship will be a step closer. Human potential is God-gifted and not a gender-construct and to acknowledge the gift of God, one needs to grow out of these stereotypes.

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