

## Role of Ethics in Providing in Sustainable Solutions to Gender Issues in Developing Countries

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### Abstract:

*In developing countries, ethics relating to gender issues is continuing to enhance in complexity. This is due to differential historical backgrounds, educational level, perception of sexual issues, traditions, rituals, attitudes, customs and the resultant behavior. Religion, caste, peer pressures have further added to this. Discussion of sexual issues is a taboo and is not considered as a cultured and sophisticated behavior. Violence, aggression, injustice, poverty, lack of education is largely responsible for aberrant behavior. Security, safety and proper development of girl child has become a major issue. Psychologists, clinicians, educationists, planners, administrator and enforcement agencies see gender issues and ethical behavior differently. Scientific and technological research has its own effect. New ways of marital relationships have caused fissions in society. LGBT groups, 'Live in' relationships have shattered the established institutions of marriage. Equality of sexes and gender issues do not look at the seriousness of trading of girl child, call girl rackets, high profile 'Rave Parties' until some calamity occurs. HIV-AIDS, STD and other forms of physical, mental and behavioral disorders afflict a significant section of youth. Tantries, Pseudo Saints, self styled God-Men and their conduct vis- a- vis girls / women raises serious ethical issues. Various forms of assisted reproductive technologies like IVF, ICSI, SURROGACY, SPERM / OVUM / EMBRYO BANKS AND CLONING have sprung up as new shock waves for every society. Political, religious, social leaders consider that they are the forerunners of uncontrollable problems in both the oriental and occidental world. It can be likened to a volcano of unlimited impact and unassisted consequence. Since these technologies are gaining ground need to evolve a structured National Policy. A model for handling ethical problems relating to gender issues vis-à-vis emerging technologies and dynamic changes in the thought processes and of action programs will be presented.*

**Key words.:** Gender Issues, Women, Taboos, Slave Labour, Rights, Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Education.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Gender issues are matters of global concern, research, and have become the rendezvous of Social Scientists, Behaviorists, Scientists, Politicians, Planners, NGOs and numerous other Stakeholders.

The birth of a baby in a family is a matter of curiosity for not only parents but for also other relations and neighbors. New technologies such as Sonography, Pre-Natal Sex Determination have added to numerous complexities in various societies of India. This is particularly so if the test show unborn baby to be a girl child. Forced Abortion, Female Foeticide acquired such an alarming rate that laws have been enacted to penalize these who practice them. Raising a girl child vis-à-vis a boy also discriminative and the verge of being cruel and indefensible. Girl education is still a taboo in various sectors of the society across the developing countries.

It is conceded that education is the catalyst for empowerment through acquisition of knowledge, wisdom, skill and experience which culminates in becoming an expert.

Electronic and telecom developments have brought societies of the developing and developed countries face to face. Exchange of information has become easier although the benefits to weaker and vulnerable sections of the society still defy percolation so that they became reachable and useable.

Patriarchal Societies across the world are embedded with the belief that men (= boys) are superior to women (= girls). Because of this they are psyched, trained and groomed to learn strategies, tactics to control and dominate women (= girls).

This happens at family, school, college, university level and in organization that have both sexes working. From a historical point of view, these conceptual training (bipartisan) have been responsible for inflicting untold injustice, unequal and discriminatory opportunities for education (all spectrum) and work. Endemic Violence of all kinds prevails which seriously impairs the IQ, SQ, EQ, etc of every girl child. It is generally agreed that patriarchy and gender injustice remain defining characteristics of societies around the world.

This seriously affects day to day life and behaviour also changes ethical conduct between sexes, violence, mental imbalance, frustrations, fear, and lack of sleep, anxiety, and decrease in motivation, desire and attitudinal changes occur in both sexes. All Societies have laws which debar unethical conduct and behaviour. But the question is how to implement these. Stress causes reduced output too. Violence takes the form of cutting off from family life or wife beating. This is universal.

Ethical conduct between sexes raises numerous issues. What kind of socialization process should be evolved that can influence gender-related behaviour? What kind of equitable and just behaviour should be inculcated in boys right from home and schools? Such a trend has direct relationship to gender sensitivity, equality and erasing adult violence and stubborn prejudice needs to be negated so that men and boys work in synergy for enforcing equality.

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All Societies are now engrossed with debate, controversies surrounding the new modules of ethics relating to gender issues. Lesbian and Gay relationships have now found legal acceptance and so has the much divorced population of bisexuals and transgender who have now voting rights and are encouraged to join the mainstream of civilized population by getting education, technical skills and other trainings that can facilitate their living with grace and dignity.

The recent developments in Nepal where in there is a constitutional provision into give similar rights to LGBT is a development that has far reaching impact not only in Nepal but also in whole Asian Continent including India. By doing so Nepal has become the first country in Asia to initiate a process of liberalization. Further the judiciary has been given powers to prevent any acts of discrimination that leads to sex and sexual matters relating to minorities. It is interesting here to record that women organizations in Nepal are angry about grant of less rights to women. Now according to constitution if a Nepali man a foreign woman, their children will be normally considered as Nepali citizens. However in case of woman, in the event of her marrying a foreign man their children will be given Nepali citizenship only if the husband obtains Nepali citizenships.

Strong pressures on traditional marital linkages and the ethical modes built around it for centuries are also being subjected to pressures. 'Live in' relationship in metros is now more open and visible feature. However, the babies born out of this relationship which can be aptly described as 'marriage of convenience' has not yet become a 'state responsibility' as is prevalent elsewhere. Single parent concept is now institutionalized.

A surprising development in human societies across the world is the marked increase in the percentage of infertile couples. Laws are flexible and so are rituals, traditions and cultural practices. Assisted reproductive technologies have emerged to address the problem and provide solutions via IVF, Surrogacy and other modes for example sperm/ovum and embryo banks. The repercussion of these on ethics needs careful investigations.

Against this backdrop of ground realities that envelops and threatens developing countries, an attempt is being made to highlight the various issues.

#### **Method:**

The Method of studies have been observational as a scientist-teacher-counsellor in important girls and co. educational colleges of the state of Rajasthan for the last three decades through interactions with youth, teachers, scientists, and common segments of population of diverse nature, an attempt is made to collect information on following:

1. **Importance of Sex Education:** in family, schools, colleges, universities of boys and girls in pre-adolescent, adolescent phases. The questions raised are: *What to Teach? When to Teach? How to Teach? Who will Teach?*
2. **Gender Discrimination:** causes, sensitivity, in-built fears, and redressal mechanisms.
3. **Ethical Standards Regarding Sex Related Matters:** difference in perceptions, attitudes, sensitivity,

atmosphere, impact of information perceived via internet (= search engines) from global point of view.

4. **Legal Aspects:** jurisdiction, flexibility, advocacy, intervention of human right two activists pleading for mercy for sexual offenders, criminals.
5. Political Intervention and lack of will to have stringent laws for quick implementation.
6. **Cultural Chaos, Class Struggle:** Conflict of interest between rich and poor in highly stratified (economically, educationally, emotionally) societies of developing countries.
7. What remedial measures are necessary?

#### **Based on the experience acquired the following suggestions are offered:**

1. Sexual Matters, Ethics and Conduct should become core issues in families, schools and colleges. Boys and Girls in the age – groups of 8 to 15 years need to be told about the differences in body, attitude, motivation, and correct code of conduct, ethical and civilized behaviour.
2. Interaction between Social Scientists, Behaviourists, Biomedical Experts, Psychologists, and Theologians should become a regular feature.
3. Every educational institution should have a club which may be called 'Youth Club' where problems of "Growing up" are discussed, debated and new avenues searched. Experts need to present new challenges for youth. No nation or society wants to be called "sex-deprived and depraved" nor does it want to be designated as a violent and unsafe geographical area for civilized and cultured human beings.
4. Globally there is a deeper concern now to start a new campaign in support of young girls and victimized women, who faced domestic violence, for violence of other descriptions. *In Out Of The Box*, thinking has been for a victimized or for a woman helping in such cases is to make a *Black Dot* on the palm of her hand. This is supposed to give a guarantee to a victim that she can narrate her trauma to a reliable person. It will also ensure that she is expressing her problems to someone who is a real professional and helper. Facebook and other modes of social platforms are being used rigorously for this. As a start, nearly 48 lacs people have already joined this campaign.

There is a strong need for such setups right upto the Panchayat level in our country to address the problems of gender violence and discrimination resulting in violence and chaos in society.

These suggestion needs to be incorporated in policy documents by the conference and they should be forwarded to the appropriate ministry at the state and national level.

It is further suggested that such social interactive clubs should be open in schools, colleges and in universities to impart education based on sharing of experience. This will sensitize the people at large and pay the way for social changes in the environment.

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