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Gender Equity Policy

Background :

The Constitution of India embodies the government's commitment to equality for both women and men within family, community and society. It supports the idea of human development, which encourages every person to be dynamically involved in the process of liberating himself or herself from every form of domination and oppression so that each man or woman will have the opportunity to develop as a whole person in relation to others. The Government of India also subscribes to and has endorsed a range of international Conventions such as –

1. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1962),
2. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989),
3. Education for All (United Nations Declaration 1990) and
4. The Beijing Declaration (1995) which called for the mainstreaming of gender issues.

Hence, it is imperative that the essence and spirit of these declarations become part of day to day life particularly in the educational system.

Understanding gender equity in education enables students and educators to recognize and remedy the constraints and inequalities that may result from not understanding constructions of gender. The Gender Equity in campus Policy aims to develop every individual to her or his full potential.

Throughout the world, attention is focused on the status of women and the need to improve the condition of their lives, and high light the benefit of a society where women and men participate as equals in all aspects of social, economic and political life. Higher education campuses have a special role in promoting gender equity between women and men. They are responsible for ensuring that what is taught and learned contributes in a positive way to the lives of both boys and girls. As educators one must ensure that female and male students have equal access to the knowledge and skills that campuses can provide. The stakeholder in the higher education system must ensure for equal participation of female and male students in class rooms.

The Gender Equity Policy (GEP) provides a frame work of principles and practices that will improve the life chances and opportunities of all students in the campus, regardless of whether



they are males or females. The education system has the responsibility to provide high quality equitable education that meets the needs of both female and male students. The Gender Equity Policy has been developed so that no students in Sheth C. D. Barfiwala College of Commerce campus are disadvantaged on the basis of gender.

Definition of “Gender”

Gender refers to the cultural and socially constructed role differences between the two sexes.

It refers to the way a society encourages and teaches the two sexes to behave in different ways through socialization. Gender does not mean focusing solely on women or females but rather on the inequalities between males and females, and should not be confused with feminism or women’s studies. It refers to ways that people act, interact, or feel about themselves which are associated with boys/men and girls/women.

Definition of “Sex” According to Robert Stoller, the term ‘sex’ is used to refer to the physical differences between men and women, and it refers to the natural biological differences between men and women; for example, the differences in the organs related to reproduction.

Gender is a culturally defined set of economic, social and political roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements and obligations associated with being female or male as well as the power relations between and among women and men, boys and girls.

Gender Roles	Sex Roles
May differ from society to society.	Same in all societies: they are universal, e.g., it is only women who give birth to children all over the world.
Can change with history.	Never change with history
Can be performed by both sexes.	Can be performed by only one of the sexes
They are socially, culturally determined	They are biologically determined.

Gender Equality This concept means that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are reconsidered, valued and favoured equally. It refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.



Gender Equity : Gender equity implies fairness in women's and men's access to socio-economic resources. Example: access to education, employment, depending on whether the child is a boy or a girl. It refers to differential treatment that is fair and positively addresses a bias or disadvantage that is due to gender roles or norms or differences between the sexes. It is about the fair and just treatment of both sexes that takes into account the different needs of men and women, cultural barriers and (past) discrimination of the specific group.

Women Empowerment :

Women empowerment refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions on their own for their personal benefits as well as for the family, community and society. It refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of women at large, to ensure equal rights to women and to make them confident enough to claim their rights, such as: _----

Freely live their life with a sense of self-worth, respect and dignity,

- Have complete control of their life, both within and outside their home and workplace,
- To make their own choices and decisions,
- Have equal rights to participate in social, religious and public activities,
- Have equal social status in society,
- Have equal rights for social and economic justice,
- Determine financial and economic choices,
- Get equal opportunity for education, water, sanitation and health.
- Get equal employment opportunity without any gender bias,
- Get safe and comfortable working environment.

II. OBJECTIVES

The education system in Sheth C. D. Barfiwala College campus has a role and responsibility in contributing to a socially just society. It can be done by ensuring equal and fair access to, participation in and outcomes from the education provided for female and male students. In order that all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the development of the country, for men's and women's aspirations, achievements and life choices must not be constrained by gender. Sheth C. D. Barfiwala College of Commerce believes in offering equal opportunity for everyone in the campus; where there is no discrimination on the basis of gender



in offering opportunities, in the allocation of resources and benefits or in access to educational services.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Gender in this policy refers to those behaviors and attitudes which are culturally accepted as appropriate ways of being a woman (femininity) and ways of being man (masculinity). The sex of a person is biologically determined, whereas ways of being a man or woman are learned: they are constructed, reinforced, maintained and reconstructed over time through social and cultural practices. Such social constructions of gender vary across cultures, social class and time.

Equity means fairness and without bias. In social exchange fairness exists when persons who have made the largest contributions receive relatively large rewards, those who have made small contributions receive small rewards, and so on. In a social context equity also involves conscience or principles of natural justice. This can result in people being given different if it is considered fair or just. Therefore, some people may be recognized as more deserving than others. The bias on which preferential treatment is made is important in judging whether a case is just or unjust. It can vary according to basic beliefs or political persuasion. Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognizes that women and men have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the sexes. Equity is not maintained where there is discrimination.

Discrimination involves treating the sexes differently in ways that suggest that one is inherently inferior to the other. Being treated differently in areas of learning and related activities can and does affect the distribution of political, economic and social benefits and influence.

Equality is different from equity. Equality means every person receiving the same treatment regardless of who or where he or she may be. Equity is the means. Equality is the goal.

V. EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The higher education system in India encourages, supports and promotes the following values and principles as being essential to the development and implementation of quality curriculum and educational experiences for male and female students.

PRINCIPLES • All students have the ability to achieve their full potential; being either male or females does not determine the capacity to learn. • Equality of opportunity and outcomes in higher education for female and male students may require that girls and boys get some preferential treatment at least for a period of time. Strategies to improve the quality of education for female students should be based on an understanding that neither men nor women are the same individually or as a group, having different needs and coming from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.



VALUES • Both female and male students should value each other and be valued equally in all aspects of Campus life. • High quality education for female students as well as for male students is a professional responsibility for all the educators in the system. • Campus life for girls and boys should reflect the entitlements of all women, in their own right, to personal respect and personal safety, economic security, and participation in and influence over decisions making which affect their lives.

VI. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Gender Equity Policy in campus is expected to result in: • Education of female and male students for a satisfying, responsible and productive life, including work inside and outside the home. • Provision of a curriculum which, in content, language and methodology meets the educational needs and rights of female students as well as male students. • Acknowledgement and respect of positive cultural values and individual differences. • Provision of a curriculum which challenges unfair cultural practices and recognizes the contribution of women to society and the full range as well as the contributions of diverse groups of men. • Encouragement the development of positive attitudes and behaviours in male and female students which promote social responsibility, empathy, and sensitive, equal and non-violent relationships. • Provision of a challenging learning environment which is socially and culturally supportive and physically comfortable for female as well as male students. • Preparing female and male students for their rights to personal respect and safety and provision of an environment that is safe and free from all forms of harassment and violence.

Provision of finances and personnel resources to ensure that the capacities of male and female students are fully and equally realized. • Acknowledgement and effective changes and lasting improvements in campus and an high degree of awareness, understanding and acceptance of the educational needs of female students on the part of students, parents, teachers, management and all stakeholders.

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