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## Text Analysis of class sixth Social Science Text Book with Reference to Gender Sensitivity

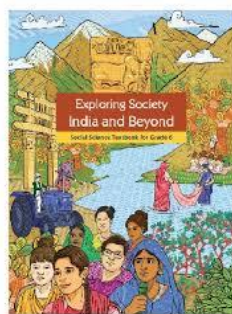
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### ABSTRACT :

Gender sensitization is an essential aspect of education that shapes young minds toward equality and inclusivity. This research paper explores the representation of gender in Class 6 textbooks, analyzing how the old and new editions differ in their approach to gender sensitivity. By reviewing the content, illustrations, language, and examples used in both versions, this study highlights the progress made in fostering gender equality in school curricula. The findings reveal a shift from gender stereotypes to a more balanced representation, reflecting the evolving discourse on gender in education.



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### Introduction :

Education has always played a vital role in shaping how we see the world and understand our place in it. Among the many lessons schools impart, one of the most important—but often overlooked—is gender sensitization. Simply put, gender sensitization is about challenging stereotypes, promoting equality, and ensuring that every child—regardless of gender—feels valued and empowered. The messages students receive in classrooms, whether through textbooks, teacher interactions, or peer conversations, influence their beliefs about what they can or cannot do. If education continues to reinforce outdated gender roles, we risk carrying forward the same biases that limit opportunities and shape societal inequalities. This research paper delves into the role school education plays in fostering gender sensitization and whether recent curriculum changes have made a meaningful impact.

An educator believes that education plays a powerful role in shaping young minds and influencing social change. Textbooks, as a primary learning resource, significantly impact how students perceive social norms, values, and roles. Throughout their teaching journey, the educator realized how deeply gender narratives in textbooks can affect students' understanding of gender roles and expectations. In India, traditional gender roles have long dominated social and cultural narratives, and older textbooks often reflected these biases. Men were commonly portrayed as breadwinners, leaders, or decision-makers, while women appeared in domestic or caregiving roles. Such representations can limit students' aspirations — particularly young girls — while reinforcing rigid stereotypes for boys.

With the introduction of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, there has been a conscious effort to promote gender equality in educational materials. The revised Class 6 Social Science textbook reflects this shift, aiming to foster gender sensitivity through improved content, visuals, and language.

Through this research, the educator decided to explore how the revised Class 6 Social Science textbook addresses gender sensitization compared to its earlier version. By analyzing specific chapters, identifying content changes, and assessing their impact, the research aimed to answer the following questions:

1. *How do the old and new Class 6 textbooks differ in gender representation?*
2. *What changes have been made to reduce gender bias?*
3. *How effectively do the new textbooks promote gender equality?*



This research holds special relevance for me as an educator committed to promoting inclusive learning environments. Understanding these changes can help teachers like me create a classroom atmosphere that empowers students, regardless of their gender.

### Literature Review :

Based on their reading, the researcher found that gender sensitization is a crucial aspect of education that helps students recognize biases and inequalities. Scholars such as Nivedita Menon (2012) and Krishna Kumar (2004) emphasize that textbooks play a key role in shaping young minds. Textbooks that reinforce stereotypes may discourage students from exploring non-traditional roles, while inclusive content can inspire new aspirations. Textbooks are not merely repositories of factual information; they are powerful tools that transmit cultural values, norms, and ideologies (Kumar, 2004). Scholars argue that textbooks play a crucial role in shaping young minds, influencing students' understanding of gender roles, expectations, and social realities (Menon, 2012). Research indicates that content that perpetuates traditional gender stereotypes can limit students' aspirations and reinforce gender inequalities (Bhog, 2009).

Research by Bhog (2009) revealed that older textbooks often portrayed men in professional roles such as doctors and engineers, while women were depicted in domestic settings. Similarly, a 2017 UNESCO study stressed the need for more female role models in diverse professions.

The NCF 2005 and NEP 2020 have both highlighted the importance of gender-inclusive content. Keeping these insights in mind, the researcher examined how the revised Class 6 textbook reflects these progressive changes. Numerous studies have documented the prevalence of gender bias in educational materials across various contexts. Research by Bhog (2009) revealed that older textbooks often portray men in professional and leadership roles, while women are relegated to domestic and caregiving roles. This disparity reinforces traditional gender stereotypes and limits students' understanding of gender roles. Similarly, a UNESCO (2017) study emphasized the need for more diverse and positive representations of women in textbooks, particularly in professional contexts.

The existing literature underscores the importance of analyzing gender representation in textbooks to promote gender equality in education. Research has documented the prevalence of gender bias in educational materials and highlighted the need for gender-sensitive content. Policy frameworks have played a crucial role in advocating for gender-inclusive education, and methodological approaches like qualitative content analysis have been instrumental in examining textbook content. Further research is needed to examine the impact of revised textbooks on students' attitudes and perceptions and to develop strategies for promoting gender-sensitive education.

### Methodology :

This research employs a qualitative content analysis methodology to examine the representation of gender within the revised Class Sixth Social Science textbook, focusing on its progress in gender sensitization compared to earlier versions

- **Qualitative Content Analysis:** This approach is chosen to systematically analyze the textual and visual content of the textbook. It allows for a detailed examination of how gender roles, representations, and narratives are constructed and presented.
- **Comparative Analysis:** The research will involve a comparative analysis of the revised textbook against established frameworks for gender sensitivity in education (e.g., UNESCO guidelines, NCF 2005, NEP 2020) and, if possible, against descriptions of prevalent gender bias in older educational materials related to the Indian context. This comparison will highlight the extent of change and the effectiveness of the revisions.

### Data Collection:

- **Primary Source:** The primary source of data will be the revised Class Sixth Social Science textbook.

- **Secondary Sources:** Relevant policy documents (NCF 2005, NEP 2020), academic articles, and reports on gender representation in education will be used to provide context and support the analysis.

#### *Data Analysis:*

Two books of social science were compared to uncover these hidden biases, which might not be immediately apparent in a single textbook. This comparison can highlight the extent to which policy recommendations are translated into tangible changes in textbook content. The books were:

**1. Old Edition (Published before the recent revision)**

**2. New Edition (Aligned with NEP 2020)**

#### *Ethical Considerations:*

- As this research deals with published educational material, ethical concerns are minimal. However, the analysis will be conducted with sensitivity and respect for the diverse perspectives represented in the textbook.
- Accurate referencing will be maintained.

#### *Limitations:*

- This study is limited to the analysis of a single textbook.
- The interpretation of qualitative data is subjective and may be influenced by the researcher's own biases.
- The study will focus on the textbook itself, and will not investigate the effect of the textbook on students.

#### *Approach involved:*

The researcher reviewed each chapter to identify gender-related content. They noted page numbers to highlight modifications in text and illustrations. The professions, roles, and activities assigned to male and female characters were compared. To support their observations, the researcher also referred to NCERT policy documents and research studies on gender bias.

- **Coding Scheme:** A coding scheme was developed to systematically categorize and analyze the data. This scheme will include codes related to:
- **Gender Roles:** Representation of men and women in various roles (e.g., domestic, professional, leadership).
- **Gender Stereotypes:** Identification of stereotypical portrayals of men and women.
- **Gender Bias:** Detection of language or visual elements that perpetuate gender inequality.
- **Visual Analysis:** Analysis of the visual representation of gender.

The findings will be interpreted in light of the research questions and the theoretical framework. The analysis will focus on identifying the extent to which the revised textbook promotes gender sensitivity and challenges traditional gender stereotypes.

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## **Chapter-Wise Analysis of Gender Representation**

### *Chapter 1: Understanding Diversity*

- Old Edition (Page 4): The examples of diversity mostly included male historical figures and male-led communities. Women's contributions were largely absent.
- New Edition (Page 6): Includes examples of female leaders and change-makers from different backgrounds. There is an added case study about a tribal woman leader advocating for rights.
- Impact: The revised edition provides a more inclusive representation of gender in discussions of diversity.

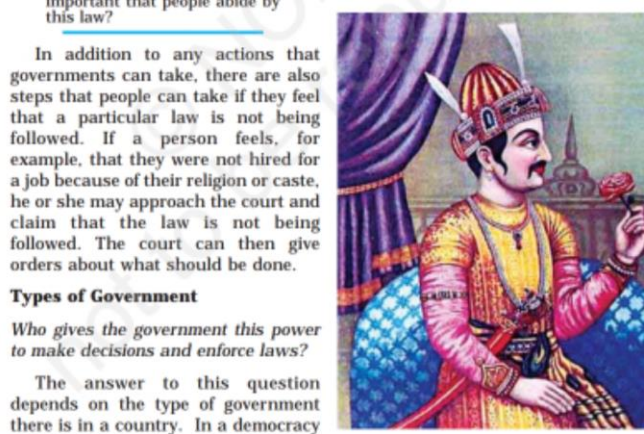


### Chapter 2: Diversity and Discrimination

- Old Edition (Page 14): Discussed caste and economic discrimination but did not focus much on gender-based discrimination.
- New Edition (Page 17): Introduces sections on gender discrimination in education and employment. Includes a real-life example of a girl facing discrimination in school.
- Impact: Acknowledges gender-based discrimination explicitly, helping students recognize these issues early.

### Chapter 3: Government and Its Role in Society

- Old Edition (Page 31): Male-dominated examples of governance; rarely mentioned women in leadership roles.
- New Edition (Page 42): Features Kiran Bedi and Indira Gandhi as examples of women in government. Also discusses the role of women in Panchayati Raj.
- Impact: Encourages young students to see women as leaders and decision-makers.



Voting in a rural area: A mark is put on the finger to make sure that a person casts only one vote.

### Chapter 4: Key Elements of a Democratic Government

- Old Edition (Page 45): Emphasized male political leaders.
- New Edition (Page 47): Adds case studies of women-led protests and political movements (e.g., Chipko Movement).
- Impact: Balances male and female contributions to democracy.

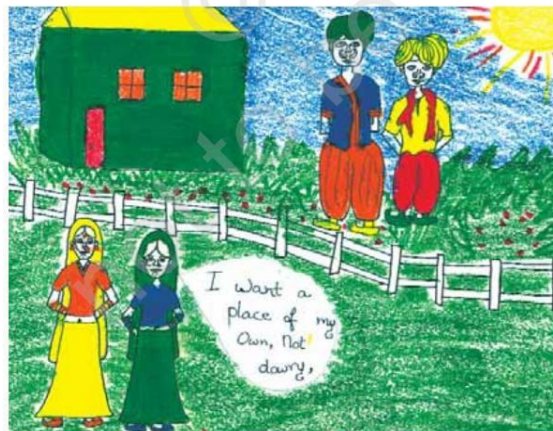
### Chapter 5: Panchayati Raj

- Old Edition (Page 45): Focused on male Sarpanches and village leaders.
- New Edition (Page 47): Highlights women as Gram Pradhans and their role in decision-making. Includes a photograph of a female Panchayat leader.
- Impact: Shows children that women can be political decision-makers in rural governance.



### Chapter 6: Rural Administration

- Old Edition (Page 52): The role of police officers, patwaris, and village officials was mostly assigned to men.
- New Edition (Page 54): Includes women in police and administrative roles.
- Impact: Encourages students to see law enforcement and administration as gender-neutral fields.



#### A daughter's wish

Father inherited our house  
from his father  
And everyone says he'll  
leave it to brother  
But what about me and my  
mother?  
To expect a share in my  
father's home,  
Is not very womanly, I am  
told.  
But I really want a place of  
my own,  
Not dowry of silk and gold.

(Source: Reflections on MY FAMILY,  
Anjali Monteiro, TISS)

### Chapter 7: Urban Administration

- Old Edition (Page 59): Mayors and municipal leaders were depicted as men.
- New Edition (Page 58): Features a female mayor's story about managing a city's sanitation crisis.
- Impact: Provides role models for girls interested in public service careers.

### Chapter 8: Rural Livelihoods

- Old Edition (Page 68): Showed men as farmers and women only as helpers in agriculture.
- New Edition (Page .): Recognizes women farmers and entrepreneurs in rural areas. Includes a section on self-help groups (SHGs) led by women.
- Impact: Acknowledges women's economic contributions beyond household labor.

### Chapter 9: Urban Livelihoods

- Old Edition (Page 78): Men were shown as factory workers, traders, and professionals, while women were mostly shown in traditional roles.
- New Edition (Page .): Depicts women as shop owners, office workers, and business leaders. Includes a section on gender pay gap.
- Impact: Encourages a broader understanding of career opportunities for all genders.

Buses whizzed past and there were auto-rickshaws filled with school-children. Nearby, under a tree, a cobbler sat taking his tools and materials out of a small tin box. Next to him the roadside barber had begun his work: he already had a customer who wanted an early-morning shave!

A little way down the road, a woman was pushing along a cart with all kinds of plastic bottles, boxes, hairpins, clips etc. in it while



#### Bachchu Manjhi - A Cycle-Rickshaw Puller

I come from a village in Bihar where I worked as a mason. My wife and three children live in the village. We don't own land. In the village I did not get masonry work regularly. The income that I earned was not enough for our family.

After I reached this city, I bought an old cycle rickshaw and paid for it in instalments. This was many years ago.

I come to the bus stop every morning and take the customers wherever they want to go. I work till 8.30 in the evening. I take

rides of up to 6 kilometres in the surrounding area. Each customer gives me Rs. 5-10 per trip depending on the distance. When I'm ill I can't do this work, so on those days I don't earn anything.

I stay with my friends in a rented room. They work in a nearby factory. I earn between Rs. 80-100 every day, out of which I spend Rs. 50-60 on food and rent. The rest I save for my family. I visit my village two or three times a year to see my family. Though my family survives on the money I send, my wife also earns from agricultural work that she gets once in a while.

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## Discussion and Findings :

The comparative analysis conducted between the older and revised Class Sixth Social Science textbooks reveals a notable and positive progression towards gender inclusivity. This shift is most evident in the significantly more balanced representation of gender within both the textual and visual elements of the revised edition. Where previous versions may have disproportionately featured male figures or narratives, the updated textbook strives for a more equitable portrayal, ensuring that both male and female characters are given adequate visibility and voice.

Furthermore, a substantial reduction in the reliance on traditional gender stereotypes is a key finding. The older textbooks frequently depicted women primarily in caregiving roles and men exclusively as workers or breadwinners, thus reinforcing rigid and limiting societal expectations. In contrast, the revised edition actively challenges these stereotypes, presenting a more diverse and nuanced depiction of both genders. This departure from conventional representations allows students to develop a broader understanding of the multifaceted roles that individuals can assume within society.

The revised textbook also demonstrates an expanded recognition of women's contributions across various domains, including governance, the economy, and social movements. This acknowledgment of women's agency and influence is crucial in challenging the historical erasure of their contributions and inspiring future generations. By showcasing women as active participants in shaping society, the textbook promotes a more inclusive and accurate understanding of history and contemporary life.

Moreover, the implementation of gender-sensitive language and imagery signifies a conscious effort to create a more equitable and respectful learning environment. The use of gender-neutral professions, such as "scientist" or "engineer," rather than gender-specific terms, and the equal depiction of men and women in various roles, further reinforces the message of gender equality and challenges ingrained biases.

However, despite these significant advancements, the analysis also reveals that some gaps remain. Notably, certain chapters still lack a sufficient representation of female role models in STEM fields. This absence can perpetuate the misconception that these fields are predominantly male-dominated and may discourage young girls from pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Additionally, while the revised textbook does depict women engaging in household labor, the illustrations could further emphasize the importance of shared responsibilities between men and women. A more balanced portrayal of domestic work would help to challenge the traditional notion that household chores are exclusively the domain of women.

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## Conclusion and Recommendations :

Reflecting on this research, we believe the revised Class 6 Social Science textbook represents a significant step forward in promoting gender sensitization. By consciously moving away from traditional stereotypes and presenting a more balanced portrayal of men and women, the updated content plays a crucial role in shaping students' perceptions about gender roles and expectations. One of the most impactful changes we observed was the increased visibility of women in leadership, governance, and professional roles. By featuring figures like Kiran Bedi, Indira Gandhi, and female Panchayat leaders, the textbook challenges the notion that power and influence are male-dominated domains. Showcasing women in diverse careers such as police officers, entrepreneurs, and mayors helps break the stereotype that certain professions are meant only for men. Equally important is the textbook's acknowledgment of gender discrimination — a topic that was largely overlooked in earlier editions. By incorporating examples of girls facing discrimination in education and employment, the revised content encourages meaningful classroom discussions about fairness, equality, and social justice. As educators, we recognize that promoting gender sensitization requires ongoing efforts. While textbook improvements are crucial, we must also actively integrate these ideas into our teaching practices. By creating inclusive classroom discussions, encouraging students to challenge stereotypes, and highlighting diverse role models, we can foster a learning environment where students, regardless of gender, feel empowered to pursue their aspirations freely.

The revised textbook is a positive step in this direction, but meaningful change requires collaboration between educators, parents, and society as a whole. By working together, we can nurture a generation that values equality, respects diversity, and challenges outdated norms.

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