



Addressing the Diverse Needs of
**HIGHER EDUCATION IN
TWENTY FIRST CENTURY**

Sanjayan T.S

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Addressing the Diverse needs in higher Education in 21st Century

EDITED BOOK

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SEX EDUCATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

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INTRODUCTION

In India, talk on sexuality openly at home and schools are not common. However, the younger generation gets exposed to the information through various media which may provide incorrect information to the curious mind. This misinformation or even lack of awareness on sexuality may be responsible for young ones being attracted towards unwanted activity.

Among the many inner urges and drives of human being, the sex is the most universal and powerful drive. We can observe the interest in sex is instinctive and starts from early infancy. The curiosity about sex related things is generally taken as a sign of great danger. The children get rebuked by the parents or are given wrong information in an atmosphere of great hush and embarrassment. This intensifies their curiosity in a much greater force than earlier. Then they try to get information from other sources like movies, in experienced companions etc. Even parents misguide their children for saving their prestigious position and ideal figure. These all creates not only unhealthy attitude towards sex and creates sex problems but also runs a risk of serious mental disorders complexes and behavioural maladjustment. Therefore, there is a need to break the silence and remove the veil of unnecessary secrecy surrounding the sex.

It has been stated in the UNESCO report of 2009 that effective sex education can give young people age appropriate, culturally relevant and scientifically accurate information, it includes structured opportunities for young people to explore their attitudes and values, and to practice the skills they will need to be able to make informed decisions about their sexual lives. Students at the secondary and higher secondary schools are at adolescent level and they have already entered the stage of puberty. It is the time they learn correct information about their body, health and its protection. In addition to this need, they are curious by nature and it is the duty of teachers and elders to provide appropriate information to these growing individuals.

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT SEX EDUCATION

Good quality sex education does not lead to young people having sex earlier than is expected based on the national average. Good quality sex education can, however, lead to later sexual debut and more responsible sexual behaviour. Giving children information on sexuality that is scientifically accurate, non-judgemental, age-appropriate and complete as part of carefully phased process from the beginning of informal schooling is something from which children can benefit. When children learn about equality and respect in relationships, they are in a better position to recognize abusive persons and situations. In the absence of this, children and young people can look for and receive conflicting and sometimes damaging messages from their peers, the media or other sources.

Sex education is not damaging to children or adolescents. Sex education encompasses a range of topics that are tailored to the age and developmental level of the child. This is what is called age-appropriateness. A child aged four to six years learns for example about topics such as friendships, emotions and different parts of the body. These topics are also relevant for older children and adolescents but are then taught at a different level. Gradually, other topics such as puberty, family planning and contraception are introduced. For most young adults, sexual relationships are built on principles similar to those of the social relationships learnt in early life. Children are aware of and recognize these relationships long before they act on their sexuality and therefore need the skills to understand their bodies, relationships and feelings from an early age.