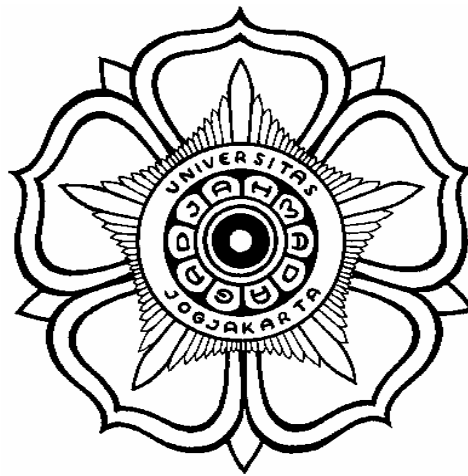


**GENDER MAINSTREAMING  
IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR**



**By:  
SRI NATIN**

**FACULTY OF LAW  
GADJAH MADA UNIVERSITY  
YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA**

**2006**

# **GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR**

By: Sri Natin

## **Foreword**

With a view to achieving successful implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Program (GMP) in education sector, the ministry of education National (MONE) has decided on and performed a series of strategic programs for gender equality and equity that can functions direction for the establishment of a national education development movement with a gender perspective.

One of the programs is capacity building, which aims at creating a process for wider understanding of the importance of right based on an approach to development that underlies MONE commitment to achieve gender equality and equity in education sector.

With wider understanding of gender equality in education, every decision, regulation, mechanism, plan, program, management and implementation process of task within MONE will be more sensitive to the needs for a balance between men and women.

Capacity building activities have been designed to be systematic and continuous. It begins with meeting and coordination activities among major units of MONE through round table discussions in which action plan paper on educational development with gender perspective (position paper) is presented and discussed.

The next stage involves discussions, interaction, and dialog among decision makers of provincial and district/municipal levels so that wider commitment to increasing gender equality and equity can be achieved.

The position papers describe situations and conditions, issues, as well gender issues at all levels of education that are summarized into the following issues: (a) equity, extension, and equality of education, (b) quality and relevance

of education, and (c) educational management. It is expected that the position papers will help local governments in carrying out capacity building activities for identifying various gender disparities that exist in education sector.

## **Introduction**

The 1945 constitution assigns the government to establish and organize a national education system that can ensure equity in education opportunities, quality improvement, and relevance and efficiency of educational management to face emerging challenges with respect to demands posed by changes at local, national and global levels. Therefore, it is necessary for educational development to be well-planned, focused, and sustainable. Equal opportunity for education aims at creating a situation in which every person has equal opportunity to obtain quality education. Act no. 20/2003 on National Education System stipulates that “every citizen has equal rights to obtain quality education” (Chapter 5 Article 1).

Such opportunity does not discriminate people by sex, social economic status, religion, and geographical location. This policy on equity and wider opportunities to obtain education emphasizes that every person, disregarding his or her origin, has equal access to all kinds, levels, as well as types of education so that improved equity in educational services can be expected. The philosophical basis for equity of education is not merely equity for the sake of equal opportunities: rather, it is equity in education for achieving equal fairness and welfare.

So far, educational development in Indonesia has shown significant improvement related to equity in learning opportunities for men and women. True equity in learning opportunities will bring implications on gender equality and equity that will eventually result in improvement of the quality of the whole human resources. Quality human resource will become a driving force to all sectors in national development.

Development of human resources quality is an integral part of all development programs in Indonesia, and closely related to the international

commitment for achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDG) that was set out since 2000 in UNO Millennium Declaration.

To improve gender equality and equity in education, the commitment established based on the MDG is related to the second goal of MDG; that is, to establish basic education for all so that, by 2015, all boys and girls will have obtained basic education. Improvement of gender equality and equity in education is also part of the attempts to achieve Goal 3 of MDG; that is, to promote gender equity and equality that can eliminate all forms of gender disparities in basic and secondary education before 2005.

MDG commitment has been continuation of various international commitments for coping with the continuously changing challenges posed by the developing world. Therefore, the roles and participation of men and women in all paths of life are necessary to ensure that they can access, benefit, and participate in the various kinds of development programs for efficient management of all resources.

The fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, held by UNO in 1995, produced a number of recommendations for UNO member countries related to attempt for increasing access and control of women over economic, political, and social-cultural resources. All recommendations and results of the conference are stipulated in Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Article 30 describes that UNO member countries have decided to guarantee men and women equal access to and treatment in education and health maintenance, as well as improvement of sexual and reproduction health of the women.

In the framework of Dakar Action Plan for Education for All (EFA), governments of all countries have collectively declared their commitment to achieve, among others, the following objectives:

1. Extending and improving all care and education of the very young children, particularly children in great risks and disadvantageous conditions;

2. Ensuring that, entering the year 2005, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult situations and those belong to ethnic minorities, have access to complete free and compulsory basic education of good quality;
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are fulfilled through existing access to relevant learning and life skills programs;
4. Achieving 50% improvement of adult literacy rate by the year 2015, particularly for the women, and equal access to basic and continuous education for all adults. Some years earlier, UNO, in its Assembly of 18 December 1979, endorsed the convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

In the Convention, member countries had condemned all forms of discrimination against women and agreed on implementing the convention in every appropriate ways without delay. The policy became an endeavor towards inclusion of the principles of equality between men and women into their national conventions or other relevant acts/ regulations (Chapter 2, section 1).

Indonesian government has attempted to ratify CEDAW through its Act no.7/1984 on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. Furthermore, it also signed the Optional Protocol to CEDAW on 28 February 2000. Indonesia's taking side on gender equality and equity is reflected in its various policy documents, which have been prepared based on the country's acknowledgement that women and men play equal roles in the life of the nation.

Since 1980 to 1990's, programs on human resource development have not yet able to promote gender equality, particularly for women. Result of development shows that, in all sector (including education), achievement of women is far behind that of the opposite sex despite the fact that policy and development programs have been designed with respect to gender anti-discrimination principles. This has been due to the existence of unequal opportunities by gender that have further implications in various gender disparity phenomena.

The implication of this is slower national production. In relation to this gender issue, there is a need for redefining the priority of our national development activities by explicitly mentioning that the development is, among others, aiming at achieving gender equality and equity.

Gender mainstreaming as basic strategy for achieving gender equality and equity is necessary to integrate gender issues into the process of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programs, and activities of national development in all sectors.

The planning of such gender responsive policies is aimed at: (1) improving potential opportunities and benefits that can be obtained through elimination of systematic discrimination against men and women, (2) integrating effort for, directly or indirectly, following up the problems and needs of men and women, (3) enhancing the role and participation of women in the development as one manifestation of human rights.

In education sector, gender disparities can be viewed from four major issues, they are: (1) problems on equity and equality in obtaining quality education at every levels, streams, and types of education, (2) educational management and its human resources, (3) curriculum, textbooks or teaching-learning materials, and teaching-learning process, (4) study program and streaming. Problems of equity and equality in education are related to participation of women, especially those of school age, in quality education.

In the management of education and educational management human resource, problems in concerns are related to the management and utilization of educational resources (human and non human) that are still bias in gender.

In relation to curriculum and teaching-learning materials, there is some of their content that is incentive to gender. Meanwhile, in the teaching-learning process, the problems are related to low participation of women in the teaching-learning process in schools or higher education.

Concerning study program and streaming, emerging problems are related to the strong stereotyping of gender in education that results in under representation of women in the distribution of Senior Vocational Secondary

Schools of SMK and in Higher Education. The impact of such stereotyping is the larger number of women registered in study programs of “soft sciences” while larger number of men are in study programs of “basic and hard sciences”.

These various gender disparities in education can be reduced in number when education development policies and programs that are presently developed or to be developed are included in the larger framework of G.M. In a number of policies and programs of the G.M, various experience, aspiration, needs, and problems of men and women has been integrated in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the whole national development policies and programs.

Through her instruction no. 9, year 2000 on GM in National Development, the President has instructed all Department and Non Department Ministers and Head of Provincial and district/municipal government institutions to implement GM in the perform GM in their planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their policies and programs that are based on gender equity and equality perspectives according to their respective functions, responsibilities and authority.

Following up the President’s instruction, MONE through the Directorate General of Out-of-School Education and Youth (DGOSEY) established its GM in Education Task Force in 2002.

A number of GM in Education programs and activities have been set out and developed by MONE with the following major activities: (1) advocacy with MONE board of executives; workshop for central and local government officials through Capacity Building program. Performed activities include, among others, round table discussions (RTD) with educational decision makers; (2) Policy Analysis: that is, performing various analysis on substance of education and formulation of materials for MONE policy making; (3) Cooperation with Centers of Women Studies, women organizations, and NGO’s interested in women issues; (4) Established of education profile and development of education data based by gender to obtain a body of statistical data and indicators of education with gender perspective; (5) Information and education communication, which include

dissemination of gender equality and equity issues by means of mass media or other relevant media to reach the community at large.

Basically, the aim of GM in education that is coordinated through DGOSEY is to assist MONE decision makers in their endeavors towards gender equality and equity across the national education system components manifested in the establishment of policies on, better understanding of, and national action plan for education with gender perspectives. To achieve such goals, GMETF has been coordinating with other related units within MONE, provincial/district/municipal education offices as well as community organizations, in implementing GM activities that include a number of policy studies, formulation of materials for MONE Minister's policies, formulation of national action plans required by the various working units as preliminary steps to the implementation of the a national movement in education development with gender perspective.

In 2003 and 2004, GMETF has been attempting extension and intensification of activities for greater sensitivity towards solutions of problems related to gender inequality that exist in the various fundamental components of the national education system.

Extension has been performed by increasing coverage of the program to include more provinces and districts, more subjects matters in the analysis of teaching materials, involvement of more community components, more intensive dissemination activities to reach the largest possible coverage of educational managers and administrators, and addition of some activities that are thought to be more relevant to the society needs in GM program.

Intensification has been done, among others, by adding more topics of research that are more relevant to needs in solving education problems that are related to gender equality and equity and are leading to action programs that can directly be employed in GM programs.

In addition, development and implementation of schools, community and family education models with gender perspective have also been attempted. Dissemination of the importance of gender equity and equality at various dimension of national education system has not only been attempted for central

and local personnel but also for stake holders of education at each region and unit of education, such as school principals, teachers, council of education and school committee.

## **CONDITION, PROBLEM, AND ISSUES OF GENDER IN EDUCATION**

### **A. Educational situation and condition**

In general, performance of the national development in education in relation to gender policies can be observed from several aspects: (1) Education strategic environment; (2) Equality and equity in education; (3) Quality and relevance; (4) Management of education.

#### **1. Education Strategic Environment**

In 2003, the number of Indonesia population reached 214,4 million people; with 107,8 million males and 106,6 million females. The largest part of the huge population, 124,1 millions or 57,9%, lived in rural sections and the other 90,3 millions or 42,1% lived in urban areas. The huge populations has positioned Indonesia as the fourth most populated country in the world after China, India and USA (CBS, 2003). It can be seen that male population is larger than the females.

Success of educational development has given effect on the importance of early childhood education (ECE) or pre-school education that prepare children for entering primary school education. If age 0-6 years old is considered as ECE or pre school age, then, in 1998-2003, almost half of the Indonesia population is of school age. This indicates that, with such large school age population, a considerable amount of facilities and funding are needed to ensure that they are accommodated in schools according to their respective levels.

The development of population of > 10 age group during 1998-2003, in relation to education, can be described as follow:

- a. The proportion of females that does not go to school or have not yet gone to school is always larger than that of the males: although a declining trend can be observed. In 2003, the figure for rural areas is 15-16% for females compared with 7,49 % for males. In fact, such great difference is not found in urban areas, in which the proportion is 6,75 % for females compared with 2,63 % for males.
- b. Similar phenomenon can also be observed in the proportion of school-aged group, i.e. for SD to S1 levels, the percentage of male students is larger than that of the females though the difference is not significant, about 1 – 2 % for each level of education. Data of 2003 indicates that, both in rural and urban areas, differences between the percentage of male and female population aged > 10 years old that are still studying, at all levels, and are not too significant. There is a declining tendency in the percentage of male and female population that is still studying at SD/MI level to SMA/SM/SMK in 1998-2003. Yet, the trend cannot be found in D1 to S1 levels in which the percentage of female population aged > 10 years old shows an increasing trend by 1,35% for 2003; whereas that of the males tend to be stable. In the long run, such phenomena will bring to equality should GM is integrated consistently.
- c. The percentage of male population aged > 10 years old that does not go to school happens to be large than that of the female group. Yet, the percentage of those groups of population signifies and increasing trend across the years.

## **2. Equality and Equity in Education**

Based on the Rate of Participation in School (RPS), Rate of Rough Participation (RRP) and Rate of Pure Participation (RPP) of 2003, it can be said that there is relatively no significant gender disparity found in primary

schools (SD) across the country. As a matter of fact, gaps though not too large, are found to exist between rural and urban sections of the country.

Based on provincial RRP for SD, significant bias against female is found in North Sumatera, Riau, Lampung, North Nusa Tenggara, East Kalimantan, and South East Sulawesi. On the contrary, significant bias against male is found in South Sumatera, Central Kalimantan, Gorontalo and North Maluku.

As in RPP for SD, significant bias against female is found in South Sumatera, West Nusa Tenggara, South Kalimantan and East Kalimantan provinces. Meanwhile, in Bengkulu, South Sulawesi and North Maluku, there is a significant bias against male of about 3%. Unlike the above mentioned provinces, relatively even education development activities in Java Island has exert positive impact for the growth of gender equity and equality in education as can be seen in the RRP and RPP.

At SLTP level, national gender bias in education exists against male, which is about 2%. Results of the Compulsory Education Program have given effect in the form of increasing women participation at SLTP. This has been due to the extension of education services, particularly in rural sections, that allow than to equal men participation. This bias against male in rural area is rather due to pragmatic factor. That is the economic condition of families in that expect boys to seek jobs as soon as possible while girls obtain greater opportunities to obtain education.

RRP for secondary education of West Sumatera and North Sulawesi shows > 10% gender bias against males. On the other hand > 10% gender bias against females is found in Banten and Papua. Data on RPP suggests that West Sumatera Province has the highest rate of gender bias against males, which is  $\pm 10\%$ . Meanwhile, in North Maluku, gender bias against females is the highest, ie  $\pm 12\%$ .

At higher education level, gender bias against males and females does also exist, though not too big ie 1-2%. In addition to the above education gaps in relation to gender variable, education disparity at SLTP and Higher

Education level does also exist across urban and rural areas; ie, 15-20%. This data indicates that educational development at primary education (SD) level, particularly in terms of equity across regions as the results of the Compulsory Education Policy (CEP), has obtained optimum success.

### **3. Quality and Relevance**

Problem related to quality and relevance of education with respect to gender issues is reflected in education streaming and study programs at secondary and higher education sector. In terms of interest in particular study programs, there are no significant differences found between that of male and female students. So, both groups have similar consideration in deciding on their interest over the available study programs/education streams. The case is different in secondary vocational schools. Difference of interest in the available study programs is striking due to gender differences. There has been a gender stereotyping for certain study programs. For example, agriculture & Forestry and Technology and Industry are men's sector while Business and Management, Tourism and Home Economics are the women's.

The existence of significant variety of interests in selecting study programs in secondary vocational schools has become stronger evidence for the role of economic factor on people decisions for sending their children to continue their education and for selecting the type of secondary schools for them. As mentioned earlier, in general secondary schools, economic hindrance in the family has forced families to set priority on their children taking vocational schools for the fasted track to employment. Yet, gender stereotyping in viewing education streaming remains an interesting issue related to policy in secondary vocational schools sector.

Gender stereotyping problems can also be observed in higher education sector, particularly in engineering study programs that show very huge gender bias. Men are considered more suitable for engineering/ technical professions while the women are for other fields such as economics and business as well as social studies.

#### **4. Management of Education.**

Problems in educational management are closely related to efficiency in the management of education and optimal utilization of resources for quality and fair services. During 2000-2003, there is tendency that female rate of retention is higher for each level of education. Some factors that can help explain such phenomena are as follows. Female students have greater commitment for learning that they are more successful than the male students (particularly in primary education/SD), and/or parents decision to have their sons help them earn a living rather than go to school (particularly in junior secondary education/SLTP in rural areas, and others. In terms of proportion of teachers/lectures, gender bias exists at all level of education and tends to remain unchanged during 2001 to 2003. Except for SD, all levels have larger proportion of male teachers/lecturers compared with the females (bias against females). Such gap tends to grow larger toward higher level of education. This can be explained by psychological and socio cultural factor, refer to complexity of problems related to interest, ego-centricity, superiority, cultural interest, and others of individuals as well as groups that color competition in career/professional world. Striking phenomenon can be observed; that is the domination of male writers over female ones a each level of education (SD, SMP and SMA). Therefore, it can be inferred that, in the writing of textbooks and curriculum development, women are not interested enough to plan a role, or may not have the capability to perform the job.

Serious gender bias does also exist quite in the education management bureaucracy. The men very much dominate the top and medium level of executive positions, getting even stronger in top positions (echelon I and II) until the year 2003. Nevertheless, the impact of such bias will not be too serious provided that the educational bureaucrats process sound perfections of gender equality and equity.

## **B. Problems and Issues of Gender Policies in Education**

Based on statistical data from the Central Bureau of Statistic (CBS) MONE, National Personal Agency (NPA) as well as findings of studies and observation on the national education system, the following problems related to gender issues can be inferred:

- The rate of illiteracy rate amongst female population shows a declining trend although they are still left behind the males. Until 2003, the proportion of non literate females in the 10-44, > 10, and > 15 age groups reaches 4,51%, 12,28%, and 13,84% respectively.
- Gender gaps are relatively not significant, particularly at SD level. At SLTP level, bias against male of 2% is found. At SLTA – HE, gender bias is relatively small (1-2%). Greatest gaps in education are found across urban and rural areas: i.e. 15-20% at SLTP to HE levels.
- Findings of studies show the existence of gender biased learning materials, particularly in certain subject matters such as civics, Indonesian language, Social Studies, Religion Study, and Physical Education. Gender bias in learning materials will produce disadvantage long-term effect on attempts towards gender equity and equality in education with gender perspective. Content of the school textbooks needs comprehensive review and refinement to eliminate existing gender bias. In relation to learning materials issue, textbook writers hold the most dominant gender bias at each level of education, from SD to SLTA, across all subject matters.
- Women are in a rather disadvantageous position to influence the direction and process of education. Firstly, their being underrepresented in the structural position and the limited understanding of education administrators and managers about the importance of gender equality have resulted in gender biased values and attitudes during decision making process. Secondly, under representation of women in functional positions such as researchers, curriculum developers, computer programmers, and professors has

resulted in women's little contribution for ideas related to education system. These have brought legitimate gender bias in a number of dimensions of the education system.

- Gender segregation phenomena can still be observed in the selection of education study program/streaming in general secondary school, vocational secondary schools and higher education institutions. This will result in gender bias treatment against males and females in job institutions and in the remuneration system. Such phenomenon is very much influenced by family values and attitudes as well as patriarchal culture that will bring gender bias in different social functions.

Based on findings of studies on educational situations and conditions, some policy issues to be given attention to can be presented.

- a. Comparative evaluations across regions show that such as the 13-15 age group of poor families in which participation of male members is lower compared with that of the females particularly in rural areas but not in urban areas where access to secondary schools is greater. Such varied condition calls for varied forms of intervention so that the various programs being implemented can really reduce gender gaps between men and women
- b. For primary school level or 7-12 age groups, with better ratio between male and female students, decision making on priority needs to consider variety across provinces, income groups, and even districts/municipality.
- c. With the secondary education level (SMP/ MTs) or the 13-15 age groups, the rate of participation is quite low. Therefore, efforts to increase participation should be directed towards both male and female population. The low rate of participation in education has been due, among others, to working, it is then very important for efforts to bring them back to school or to provide equivalent education opportunities for them.

- d. For secondary school and higher education levels which national rate of participation is still low, efforts for increasing participation of population should be done with each community group and in all regions with emphasis on population with poor socio-economic status.
- e. In relation to improvement of literacy education, it is very clear that literacy rate of the female population is far below that of the males in rural and urban areas, across adult age-groups, and family income groups. However, top priority in literacy education should be given to poor female population living in rural areas and aged > 25 years old, due to their being the lowest in literacy rate. Following this group is the male population of the same age group, poor, and living in rural areas.
- f. Kindergarten and primary school teachers are mostly women. Yet, the higher the level of education, the smaller proportion of female teachers is found. This is due to assumptions that teaching early years/grades is similar to child care job with relatively smaller salary. Therefore, it is considered more suitable for women as it is similar to their domestic role. On the other hand, secondary school teachers and university lectures are considered as “professional” positions with greater salary that are more suitable for men. The society still perceives men as assuming greater role as family bread winner. Such condition is made worse by the teacher recruitment process that does not consider gender equality.
- g. Content of learning materials that discusses the status and functional role of women in the society shows a gender blindness tendency. Such condition will greatly affect gender gaps in education process. It is due to the fact that teaching learning materials have a long term effect on the acquisition process of values and attitudes on the part of students, (such as civics, Indonesian Language and Literature, Social Studies, Religion Study and Physical Education).

- h. The effect of stereotyping of gender in the society has led more women to enroll in study programs of behavioral sciences and social services (soft sciences); such as psychology, educational science paramedics, business, and other. Meanwhile, more men tend to enroll in study programs that are related to basic and hard sciences such as science, automotive, technology, industry, and the like. Such reality has been caused more by the small proportion of women enrolling in science or mathematics streams in general secondary schools rather than the gender intensive higher education admission system. Therefore, gender equality issue need to be handled earliest, beginning in basic education until secondary education.