

AWARENESS TOWARDS GENDER SENSITIVITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A STUDY

Dimple Juneja*

ABSTRACT

A study of awareness towards gender sensitivity in teacher education institutions was carried out. Survey method was used in the study. The tool for data collection was self made questionnaire. The statistical techniques used were percentage and t-test. The sample was selected using purposive sampling. The related literature studied were researches done in India and abroad. Analysis and interpretation of the data was carried out and conclusions were drawn.

KEYWORDS: *Gender, Gender Sensitivity, Student Teachers, Teacher Educators.*

Introduction

Bringing gender sensitivity in practice in the wide spectrum of teacher education institutions is important for couple of reasons. Firstly, gender sensitivity is a very important concept at the international level. Secondly, teachers are the core of education system as they fulfill the prime objectives of imparting ethics, awareness and evolution of inner potential and traits.

Need and Justification of Present Study

Before carrying out the research, it is important to ascertain the need of the research. Gender sensitivity is one of the most debated topics of the today. It is strongly argued that if the society as a whole becomes gender sensitive, this world will be much better place to live. Teacher educators are perceived as best transformers of the society. This research helps us to find out the present status of gender sensitivity in teacher education institutions. On the basis of the findings, we can suggest ways to make institutions more gender sensitive. Gender sensitive institutions will produce gender sensitive teacher educators. Gender sensitive teacher educators will play a pilot role in making gender sensitive society. Hence the research is justified.

Statement of Problem

“A study of awareness towards gender sensitivity in teacher education institutions”

Research Questions

- What is the status of gender sensitivity in teacher education institutions?
- Are teacher educators aware about gender sensitivity?
- Is there any difference between awareness of gender sensitivity in male and female teacher educators?
- Are student teachers aware about gender sensitivity?
- Is there any difference between awareness of gender sensitivity in male and female student teachers?

Objectives

- To study the status of gender sensitivity in teacher education institutions
- To find out the awareness among teacher educators towards gender sensitivity

* Mateshwari Teachers' Training College, Umarda, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India.

- To find out the difference between awareness of male and female teacher educators towards gender sensitivity
- To find out the awareness among student teachers towards gender sensitivity
- To find out the difference between awareness of male and female student teachers towards gender sensitivity

Hypotheses

- There is no difference of awareness among male and female teacher educators towards gender sensitivity.
- There is no difference of awareness among male and female student teachers towards gender sensitivity.

Methods, Tools and Techniques

Method	:	Survey Method
Tool	:	Self Made Questionnaire
Techniques	:	Percentage and t-test

Sampling

Four Co-ed teacher education institutions of Udaipur city are selected using purposive sampling and 10 teacher educators (5 males and 5 females) and 40 student teachers (20 males & 20 females) from each of these are taken as sample using purposive sampling too.

Delimitation

The present study is delimited in the following manner:

Area wise	:	The present study is limited to Udaipur city only.
Institution wise	:	The present study is limited to four Co-ed teacher education institutions.

Study of Related Literature

The related literature relevant to the present research can be divided into following categories:

- Researches done in India
- Researches done in foreign countries

Data Collection

To collect the data of gender sensitivity on selected sample, researcher used self made questionnaire as a tool. Teacher educators and student teachers were taken as sample by researcher.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Objective: To study the status of gender sensitivity in teacher education institutions

For this, we will take the overall percentage of all the seven areas for student teachers and four areas of teacher educators.

Table 1

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Co – curricular activities	72	24	4	77	21	2
2	College infrastructure and utilities	84	16	0	94	6	0
3	College environment	62	33	5	65	32	3
4	Learning and its evaluation	39	60	1	44	54	2
5	College administration	57	42	1	67	28	5
6	Curricular approach	84	11	5	87	10	3
7	Reading material	64	28	8	66	32	2
Teacher Educators							
8	Pedagogical practices	71	24	5	73	25	2
9	College growth and development	67	27	6	68	27	5
10	College administration	59	34	7	60	33	7
11	Curricular approach	74	19	7	76	20	4
	Total	67	29	4	71	26	3

Overall, 67% of the male student teachers and teacher educators have responded in yes for questions on all areas, 29% of male student teachers and teacher educators have responded in negative while 4% male student teachers and teacher educators have responded in partial. Overall, 71% of the female student teachers and teacher educators have responded in yes for questions on all areas, 26% of female student teachers and teacher educators have responded in negative while 3% female student teachers and teacher educators have responded in partial. So we can say that high level of gender sensitivity exists at teacher education institutions both at student teachers and teacher educator's level.

Objective: To find out the awareness among teacher educators towards gender sensitivity

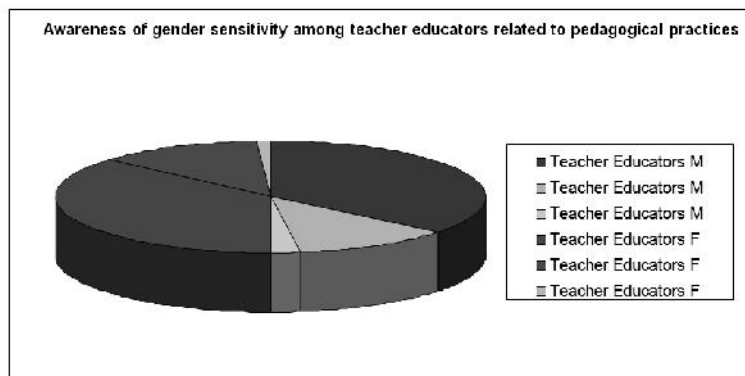
The area wise analysis of the collected data is as follows:

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in pedagogical practices

- To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in the area of pedagogical practices, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 2

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Teacher Educators					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the instructional strategies of teacher educators are biased towards any gender in the classroom?	60	40	0	65	35	0
2	Do the teacher educators take note of gender sensitivity in the use of language?	75	15	10	60	35	5
3	Do the teaching aids indicate any bias to a specific gender?	45	55	0	35	65	0
4	Does the physical education program take care of issues of gender needs?	70	20	10	80	15	5
5	Do the teacher educators give equal responsibilities to student teachers of both the genders?	80	20	0	85	15	0
6	Do the teacher educators provide guidance and encouragement to student teachers of both the genders?	90	10	0	95	5	0
7	Are student teachers of both the genders given adequate support to participate in lecture room interactions?	80	10	10	90	5	5
Total		71	24	5	73	25	2



Graph 1

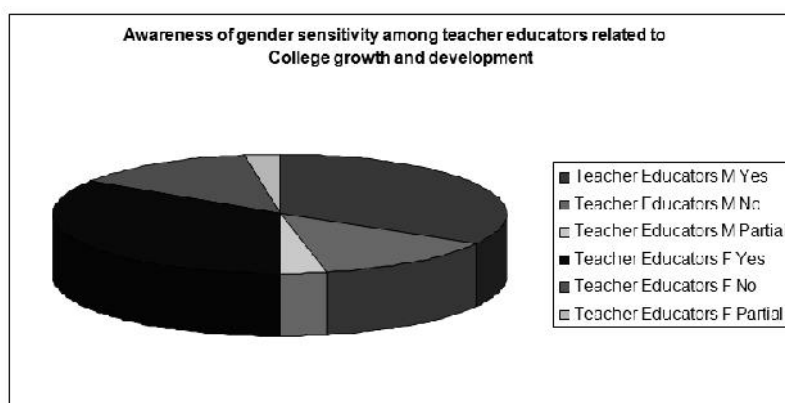
Answers to all the questions except question no. 1 indicate healthy gender sensitivity in the way of working of teacher educators (both male and female) in the area of pedagogical practices. Only on the question on bias in instructional strategies towards any gender in the classroom, gender sensitivity seems to be little bit lacking.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in college growth and development

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in the area of college growth and development, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 3

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Teacher Educators					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the teacher educators find that the college takes care of their training needs without any gender bias?	60	40	0	60	40	0
2	Do the teacher educators find that the promotion policy of the college is not biased towards any gender?	60	40	0	60	40	0
3	Do the teacher educators find that their good work is rewarded without any gender bias?	80	0	20	85	0	15
Total		67	27	6	68	27	5



Graph 2

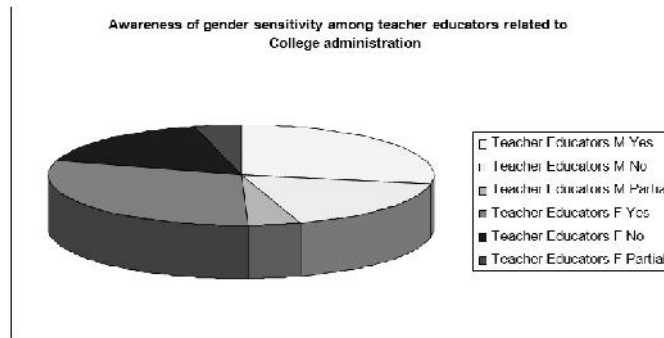
Answers to all the questions indicate healthy gender sensitivity in the area of growth and development of teacher education institutions. The best thing is that both male and female teacher educators are equally positive about gender sensitivity in this area.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in college administration

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in the area of college administration, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 4

S. No.	Questions	Teacher Educators			Teacher Educators		
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Is there bias reflected towards either of the gender in the college policies?	35	50	15	40	45	15
2	Is there gender biasness in work distribution?	65	35	0	60	40	0
3	Is staffroom facility gender friendly?	70	10	20	80	5	15
4	Are appropriate toilet facilities available for both the genders??	60	40	0	60	40	0
Total		59	34	7	60	33	7



Graph 3

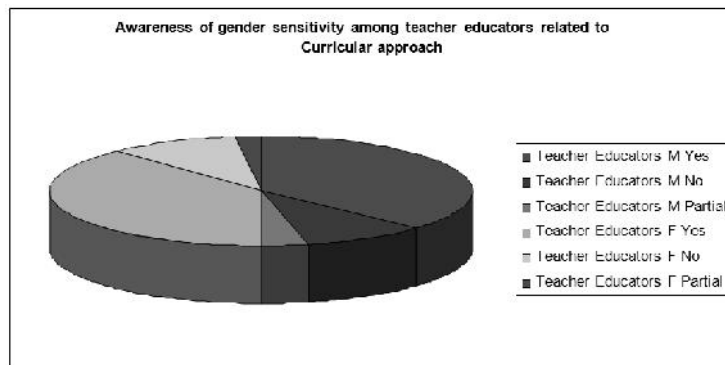
On 3 out of 4 questions asked in this area i.e. college policies, staffroom facilities and toilet facilities, the responses reflect high level of gender sensitivity but answers to the question on gender bias in work allocation show lack of gender sensitivity.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in curricular approach

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (male and female) in the area of curricular approach, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 5

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Teacher Educators					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the teacher educators of both the genders get equal representation in various committees on curriculum?	100	0	0	100	0	0
2	Is the existing curriculum helpful in developing gender sensitivity?	65	25	10	75	20	5
3	Are teacher educators sensitive to gender issues while teaching in classroom?	65	25	10	70	25	5
4	Are the co – curricular programs organised in the college gender sensitive?	65	25	10	60	35	5
	Total	74	19	7	76	20	4



Graph 4

Responses to all the questions reflect the presence of high level of awareness of gender sensitivity among teacher educators (both male and female) in the area under study.

Objective: To find out the difference between awareness of male and female teacher educators towards gender sensitivity.

Analysis of difference between gender sensitivity of male teacher educators and female teacher educators

For this, we will take the overall percentage of all the four areas for teacher educators and will calculate the t – value

Table 6

S. No.	Area	Percentage Teacher Educators					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Pedagogical practices	71	24	5	73	25	2
2	College growth and development	67	27	6	68	27	5
3	College administration	59	34	7	60	33	7
4	Curricular approach	74	19	7	76	20	4
	Total	68	26	6	69	26	5

Using the above percentages, we get the following figures:

t value = 0.068

Degrees of freedom = 38

t-table value on 40 d.f. = 2.02 (0.05) ; 2.71(0.01)

Since t value is less than the table value 2.02 at .05 level and 2.71 at .01 level so our hypotheses is accepted at both the levels. It means there is no difference of awareness among male and female teacher educators towards gender sensitivity.

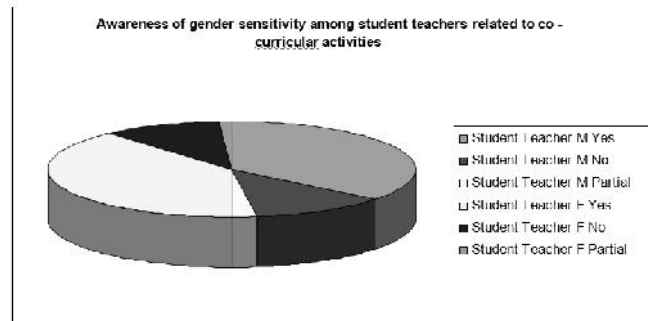
Objective: To find out the awareness among student teachers towards gender sensitivity

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in co-Curricular activities

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in the area of co-curricular activities, the percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 7

S. No.	Questions	Percentage Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Are both genders given equal opportunities in representing the college in various programs?	89	09	2	93	07	0
2	Are there any restrictions to either gender students in participating in field trips?	15	79	6	26	71	3
3	Are both genders given equal opportunities in programs like scouts and guides, N.C.C., N.S.S. etc?	86	8	6	90	5	5
4	Are both genders given equal opportunity to participate in sports of their choice?	96	0	4	98	0	2
	Total	72	24	4	77	21	2



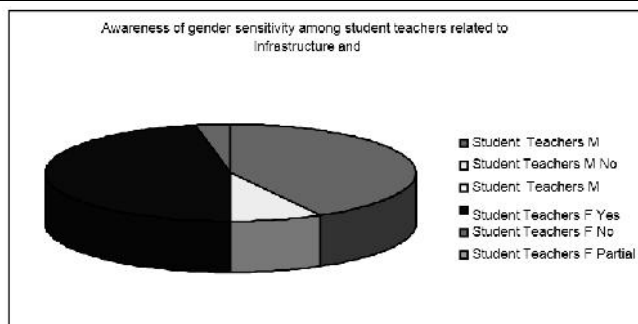
From the data, it can be interpreted that both male and female student teachers have rated the gender sensitivity very high in their respective colleges in the area of co – curricular activities. The best part is that female student teachers have given even higher percentages than their male counterparts indicating very healthy gender sensitivity in their colleges in this area.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in college infrastructure and utilities

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in the area of college infrastructure and utilities, the percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 8

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
	Are the following facilities equally available for both the genders?	Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Toilet	100	0	0	100	0	0
2	Playground	71	29	0	93	7	0
3	Canteen	78	22	0	85	15	0
4	Library	100	0	0	96	4	0
5	Laboratory	80	20	0	94	6	0
6	Common Room	73	27	0	93	7	0
	Total	84	16	0	94	6	0



Graph 6

From the data, it can be interpreted that almost all the male and female student teachers have stated that toilet and library facilities are equally available for student teachers of both the genders. A very high number of female student teachers have stated that playground; canteen, laboratory and common room facilities are available for student teachers of both the genders while a high number of male student teachers have also stated the same.

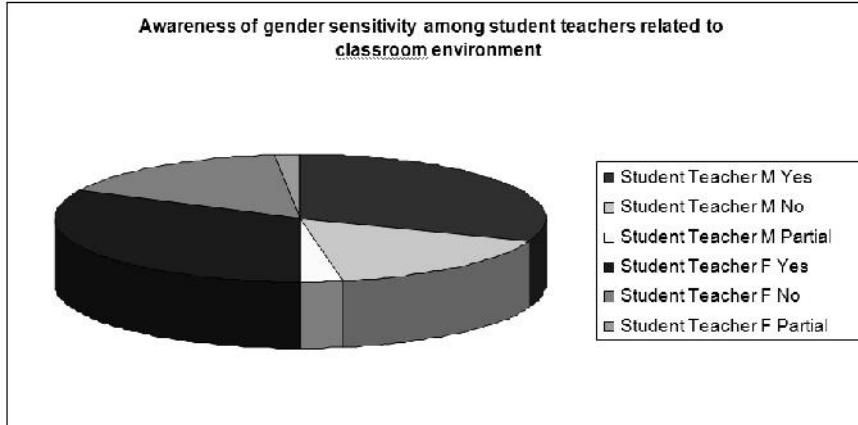
Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in college environment

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in the area of college environment, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 9

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the female student teachers feel that the female teacher educators favour male student teachers?	33	62	5	29	66	5
2	Do the male student teachers feel that the male teacher educators favour female student teachers?	30	61	9	34	59	7

3	Do the student teachers of both genders hesitate to take tea etc. together during free time?	40	58	2	45	53	2
4	Do the student teachers of both genders respect each other?	91	3	6	100	0	0
5	Do the student teachers of both genders participate in classroom activities equally?	94	0	6	100	0	0
6	Is there separate seating arrangement for both the genders?	82	14	4	80	13	7
Total		62	33	5	65	32	3



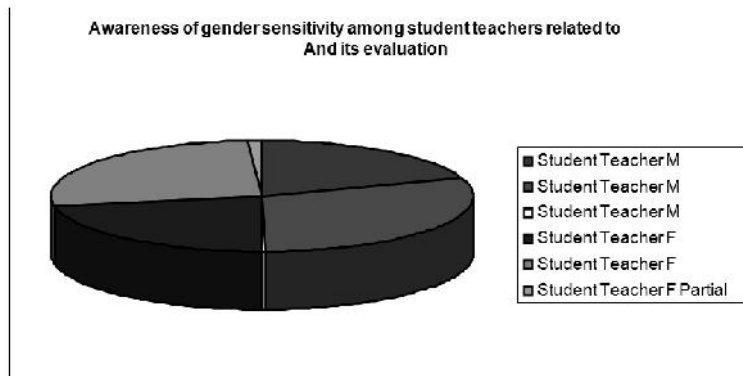
From the data, it can be interpreted that the college environment is very much gender sensitive. More than 50% of both female and male student teachers have stated that there is no bias in teacher's behaviour towards either gender. More than 50% of student teachers of both the genders don't hesitate to drink tea together during the free time.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in learning and its evaluation

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in the area of learning and its evaluation, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 10

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the student teachers feel that the learning evaluation technique is not biased towards a specific gender?	53	47	0	60	40	0
2	Do the student teachers feel that their teacher educators are impartial while evaluating their learning?	56	41	3	54	39	7
3	Do male teacher educators hesitate to ask questions to female student teachers?	21	79	0	33	67	0
4	Do the female teacher educators hesitate to ask questions to male student teachers?	13	87	0	28	70	2
5	Do the male teacher educators give more opportunity to male student teachers to participate in learning?	40	60	0	48	52	0
6	Do the female teacher educators give more opportunity to female student teachers to participate in learning?	53	47	0	41	54	5
Total		39	60	1	44	54	2



Graph 8

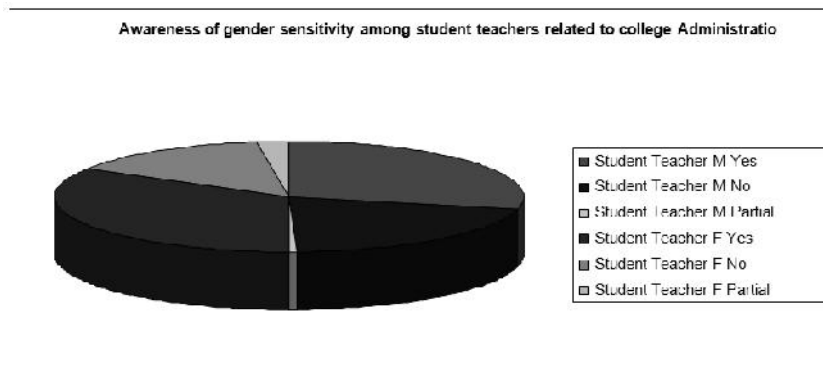
From the data, it can be interpreted that on the questions on whether teacher educators hesitate to ask questions to student teachers of opposite gender, both male and female student teachers have responded negatively which clearly highlight gender sensitivity in this aspect of learning and its evaluation. On the question on learning evaluation technique, more than half of both male and female student teachers have responded that it is not biased towards a specific gender. On the questions on whether teacher educators give more opportunities to learn to student teachers of same gender, both male and female student teachers seem to be more and less equally divided on the issue.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in College Administration

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in the area of college administration, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 11

S. No.	Questions	Percentage Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the student teachers feel that the policies of the college are sensitive to the needs of both the genders?	58	40	2	65	30	5
2	Do the student teachers find the official communication of the college with their parent's gender neutral?	59	39	2	81	13	6
3	Do the student teachers feel that there is zero tolerance policy against gender abuse?	54	46	0	56	41	3
Total		57	42	1	67	28	5



Graph No. 9

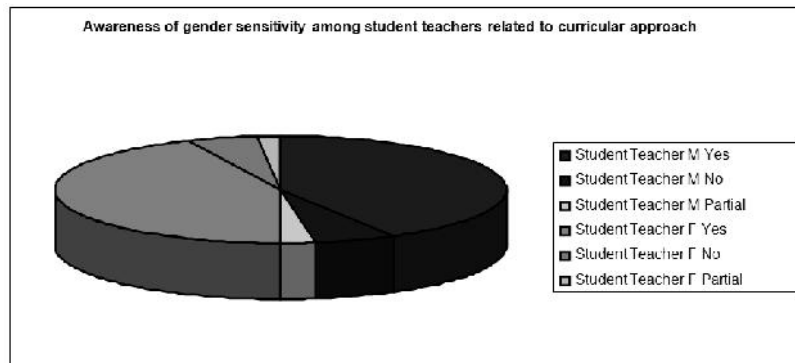
From the data, it can be interpreted that responses to all the questions of both male and female student teachers in the area show clear gender sensitivity in college administration. The female student teachers are even more positive about gender sensitivity in college administration.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in curricular approach

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in the area of curricular approach, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 12

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the student teachers of both the genders get equal opportunity and encouragement in choice of subjects?	86	9	5	95	5	0
2	Does the curriculum provide equal opportunity for students of both genders in physical and work allocation?	81	14	5	78	15	7
Total		84	11	5	87	10	3



Graph No. 10

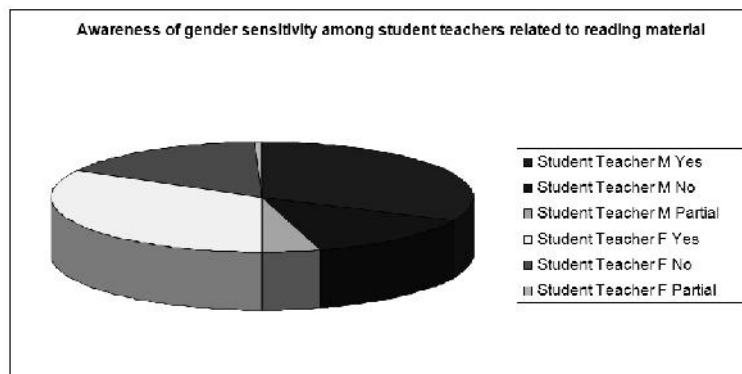
From the analysis of data, it can be interpreted that teacher education institutions are high on gender sensitivity in the area of curricular approach.

Analysis of awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in Reading Material

To analyse the awareness of gender sensitivity among student teachers (male and female) in the area of curricular approach, percentage has been calculated of the collected data and is presented in the table below:

Table 13

S. No.	Questions	Percentage					
		Student Teachers					
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Do the student teachers find the reading content gender sensitive?	53	39	8	55	45	0
2	Do the student teachers find the language in reading books gender sensitive?	78	14	8	89	11	0
3	Do the student teachers find the illustrations gender sensitive?	60	30	10	55	41	4
Total		64	28	8	66	32	2



From the analysis of the data, it can be interpreted that teacher education institutions are high on gender sensitivity in the area of reading material. The positive responses by female student teachers are even higher than their male counterparts on two out of three counts.

Objective: To find out the difference between awareness of male and female student teachers towards gender sensitivity

Analysis of difference between gender sensitivity of male student teachers and female student teachers

For this, we will take the overall percentage of all the seven areas for student Teachers and will calculate the t – value:

Table 14

S. No.	Area	Student Teachers			Student Teachers		
		Male			Female		
		Yes	No	Partial	Yes	No	Partial
1	Co – curricular Activities	72	24	4	77	21	2
2	College infrastructure and utilities	84	16	0	94	6	0
3	College environment	62	33	5	65	32	3
4	Learning and its evaluation	39	60	1	44	54	2
5	College administration	57	42	1	67	28	5
6	Curricular approach	84	11	5	87	10	3
7	Reading Material	64	28	8	66	32	2
	Total	66	31	3	71	26	3

Using the above percentages, we get the following figures:

t value = 0.681

Degrees of freedom = 158

t-table value on 200 d.f. = 1.97 (0.05) ; 2.60 (0.01)

Since t value is less than the table value 1.97 at .05 level and 2.60 at .01 level so our hypotheses is accepted at both the levels. It means there is no difference of awareness among male and female student teachers towards gender sensitivity.

Research Conclusions

On the analysis of the collected data, we can draw the following conclusions:

- To study the status of gender sensitivity in teacher education institutions, in the area of co-curricular, college infrastructure, classroom environment, learning and its evaluation, curricular approach, reading material, pedagogical practices, college growth and development, college administration, the analysis of responses of student teachers reflect a high of status of gender sensitivity.
- To find out the awareness among teacher educators towards gender sensitivity in the area of pedagogical practices, college growth and development, college administration and curricular

approach, the analysis of most of the responses reflects awareness among teacher educators towards gender sensitivity.

- To find out the difference between awareness of male and female, teacher educators towards gender sensitivity. In the area of pedagogical practices, college growth and development, college administration and curricular approach, the answers of male and female teacher educators move in the same direction and they are very close to each other percentage wise so there is not much difference in the awareness of male and female teacher educators towards gender sensitivity. On the application of t – test on percentages, we found that there is no difference in the awareness of male and female teacher educators.
- To find out the awareness among student teachers towards gender sensitivity. In the area of co-curricular, college infrastructure, classroom environment, and learning and its evaluation, college administration, curricular approach and reading material, the analysis of responses of student teachers reflects high status of gender sensitivity.
- To find out the difference between awareness of male and female student teachers towards gender sensitivity. In the area of co-curricular, college infrastructure and utilities, classroom environment, learning and its evaluation, college administration, curricular approach and reading material, the answers of male and female student teachers move in the same direction and they are very close to each other percentage wise so there is not much difference in the awareness of male and female teacher educators towards gender sensitivity. On application of t – test it was found that there is no difference in the awareness of male and female student teachers towards gender sensitivity.

Suggestions for Future Research

The researcher has put forward following suggestions in the present research.

- The research at higher level can be conducted by choosing a broader sample.
- The research can be conducted by including more areas of teacher education institutions.
- The research can be conducted at university level .
- The research area can be extended by including teacher education Institutions from rural areas.
- The research can be conducted for whole state of Rajasthan.

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