

Appendix 6

Proceedings of Value Discussion Sessions

Detailed record of the presentation and proceedings of all the 16 Value Discussion Sessions was maintained by the investigator. The record contains the theme of the dilemma, mode of presentation, day, date and time, prediscussion response of the group, arguments presented by each group, counter arguments by students, probe-questions by the investigator and the post-discussion response of the group. Observations regarding the class environment and students' behaviour were also recorded. The investigator took down important points during the session. Besides, all the small groups put down their arguments in writing and submitted the papers to the investigator. The prediscussion and postdiscussion choices were put down on slips of papers and willing students also expressed them verbally in the class.

Three samples of the proceedings of the Value Discussion Sessions are presented here.

Date : October 30, 1993
Day : Saturday
Time : 7.30 am to 9.15 am
Presentation : Story-telling with large photographs
: (cut-out from calenders) used like
: flash-cards.
Theme : This is Rupa. The photograph shows
: her wedding ceremony. Here are her
: parents and here is the bridegroom.
: Rupa feels that even after her
: marriage, she should be given an
: equal share in her parents property.
: The second photograph shows Rupa's
: two brothers who do not like the
: idea of Rupa getting an equal share
: in parents' property.

Q. What should Rupa's parents do?

- (1) Give Rupa an equal share.
- (2) Divide the property only among the two brothers.
- (3) Any other option.

Pre-discussion voting showed 34 students supporting the idea that Rupa should get an equal share in the property. There were only ten in this group.

The second group of 20 students - all girls - said that a married daughter should not have any claim on the parents' property.

Both these groups were further divided into smaller groups of five to six students. Each small groups than worked on their own for about 40 minutes and put down the collective arguments on paper.

**Arguments Presented in Favour of
Position - 1
(Rupa should get equal share in parents property)**

1. Those who believe in equality between men and women, should support girls getting equal right to property.
2. Its commonly argued that parents spend a lot on girls' education and wedding so there is no need to give them a share in property. But, parents spend on boys' education and wedding too. It has nothing to do with property rights.
3. Expenditure on wedding is parents' own personal choice. If they want, they can spend less. Moreover, boys spend parental money on various things - sometimes on vices, sometimes just to have some fun.
4. Times have changed today so we must change. Not giving property to girls is an injustice.
5. People say that after marriage a girl has to go and live with her husband's family but it is not her fault, and anyway, girls did not design this convention.
6. Right to parental property would give great support to a girl if in future she lands into trouble. For example, economic crisis in her family, disability or death of her husband or divorce. After death of her parents she will not have to be economically dependent and face humiliation.

It is brothers' duty to spend money for sister's welfare. They should not shirk their responsibility even if the girl receives equal share in property.

**Arguments Presented in Favour of
Position - 2
(Parents should divide the property only among two brothers)**

1. Parents have to spend a lot on a daughter. First of all on education, then on professional training and after that on wedding. They have to give her utensils and furniture to set up her home. Besides, girls have to be given dowry. After spending so much of money, how can a daughter demand property?
2. Parents spend a lot of money on daughter's education but they do not get anything from her income. Her in-laws get benefit from her income. A girl should understand this, demand a share in her in-law's property and should not put her parents and brothers in economic crisis.
3. It is our Indian tradition that once a woman is married, her husband and not her parents, has to look after her.
4. Parents have no right on daughter after marriage so what right has she on their property? Even when they are ill or in trouble, the sons and daughters-in-law are going to take care of them.
5. Property rights to girls will be treated as a kind of a dowry under a different name. It will actually have negative consequences for girls.
6. Parents always marry their daughters into superior and financially better-off families. So daughters do not need parents' property.

7. If a girl from financially poor family claims property right her brothers and parents would have to starve. A girl would have her husband to support her but her brother has to support his wife, children and parents. Girls who claim parental property would be a great burden for their parents.

Probe Questions by the Investigator

- (1) Is it really so that girls always get married into superior and financially better-off families?
- (2) Some of you argue that if girls have equal right on parental property, boys would prefer to marry girls only from families with good property. It will have negative consequences. On the other hand, you seem to support the practice that girls be married in to financially stronger families. Isn't it equally unjust for boys who are good but from poor families?
- (3) When girls have equal right to parental property, should parents expect married daughters to support the family of origin?
- (4) Many of you stated that parents have no right on daughters after they are married nor can they get the benefit of daughter's income. Do you support these conventions?
- (5) Is it possible to evolve more need-based flexible system of inheritance?

Date : October 1, 1993
 Day : Friday
 Time : 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm
 Presentation : Film clip recorded on video.
 Theme : The film clip is taken from the
 : Hindi film "Andhi" directed by
 : Gulzar and starring Sanjeevkumar as
 : J.K., Suchitra Sen as Aarti and
 : Rehman as Aarti's father.
 : Aarti's father is a leading
 : political figure. Aarti has married
 : J.K., a hotel manager despite her
 : father's opposition.
 : The scene on video begins with Aarti
 : and J.K. in morning at their home in
 : a happy mood. J.K. is photographing
 : Aarti when she gets up and begins to
 : get ready to go out. As she takes
 : out a Khaddar Sari, J.K. senses that
 : she plans to go for a political
 : meeting with her father. J.K.
 : objects, harshly tells Aarti to stay
 : at home and look after home and
 : their daughter. Aarti says that
 : sometime when she has to go, he can
 : take leave from work and look after
 : their daughter. J.K. does not agree
 : and tells Aarti to stop 'Netagiri'
 : (leadership).
 : Later when Aarti goes to meet her
 : father, he is very upset. He had
 : encouraged Aarti to acquire a
 : higher degree in law and become a
 : barrister so that she had a bright
 : future ahead. Now he feels, she is
 : putting everything at stake for a
 : lowly hotel manager. She should not
 : sacrifice her political ambition and
 : career for him.

Q. What should Aarti do?

- (1) To sacrifice her political career and ambition
- (2) Go ahead in politics and not waste her talent and education
- (3) Find any other option.

Pre-discussion voting showed 28 students - all boys - opting for the position 1 whereas 3 students - 2 boys and 1 girl - opted for the position 2. A group of 18 students - 15 girls and 3 boys - said that they did not agree with either and would like to find some other option.

The first and the third group divided themselves into smaller groups to work out arguments in support of their position and discussed for about 50 minutes.

Arguments Presented in Favour of Position - 1

(Aarti should sacrifice her political career and ambition)

- (1) If Aarti had listened to her father and had not married J.K. she could have fulfilled her ambition but she never listened to him. Now that she is married she should obey her husband.
- (2) Once a woman gets married, she has all kinds of restrictions (*Lagna pachhi stri saat feraa naa atut bandhanmaa bandhai jaay chhe*). When she becomes mother she has added responsibilities (*Maanu mamtabharyu mahaan roop dhaaran kare chhe*). Aarti has to obey her husband's wishes and look after her child. Failing this her children will not get proper love and care and may later become anti-social elements. Instead, Aarti should concentrate on developing her child into a good leader and fulfil her ambitions through her child.

- (3) A young child needs mother. Only mother can form good habits in children (*BaaLakne maataa-j-sanskaar aapi shake*).
- (4) If Aarti wanted to join politics and become a leader, why did she get married? She should have remained single.
- (5) Aarti's husband has a good job with good income. Why should Aarti work?
- (6) How long can Aarti's husband keep on taking leave? After all, a home is home because of woman (*ghar toe stri vagar shobhe-j- nahin*). Family should be her first priority.
- (7) Aarti can stay at home, look after her child and do some other work like dress making, embroidery etc if she wants to earn.
- (8) A woman should never have political ambitions. It brings bad name to her and her entire family (*badnaami thaay chhe*).

**Arguments Presented in Favour of
Position - 2**

(Aarti should go ahead in politics)

- (1) Aarti's father has spent so much money on her education. She has acquired higher degrees. If she becomes a leader, she will have plenty of money. She can keep a good governess for the child. Hiring a governess will resolve the entire conflict.
- (2) The child's grandparents can look after her.

**Arguments Presented in Favour of
Position - 3**

(Any other option)

- (1) Aarti's husband is right in a way and her father is also right in a way. Aarti can balance her time between work and home in such a way that her child receives adequate care and love. If her husband gives her full co-operation it is possible.
- (2) Aarti should work but the rest of the time she should concentrate on her daughter. This way she can fulfil her ambition and can also please her husband.
- (3) Child is not only mother's responsibility. Father too, has to share this responsibility. If Aarti has an important meeting her husband should take leave. He should also help her with other household chores. Then Aarti can certainly manage home and career. She should not waste her talents and education.
- (4) Husband and wife should compromise and find a mutually acceptable solution because if parents keep fighting it is very bad for children.
- (5) If a man continues to work after marriage, why can't a woman?
- (6) Husband and wife dream many dreams together. If wife also earns they can fulfil these dreams. So an educated woman should utilise her education and earn. At the same time she should not neglect her child and home by over-concentrating on her career.

Questions by the groups to one another

- (1) Can hiring a governess solve all the problems?
- (2) Is it fair to fulfil one's ambitions through one's child? Aarti has a daughter. If Aarti implants her ambition for a political career in her daughter, would not the daughter face the same problems when she grows up?
- (3) Your group said that if a woman entered politics she would get a bad reputation. Should we young people support such social conventions or fight them?

Probe Questions by the Investigator

- (1) Some of you say that if a woman wants to be a political leader she should not get married. Would you suggest the same for a man?
-----> The answer was 'No'. <-----
Why? (This question led to a long discussion on how we expect much more from a woman as wife, mother and daughter-in-law compared to a man.)
- (2) You said that a young child needs lots of love and care. Very true. Can only mother give these or also father? Anyone else?
- (3) Would Aarti want to work for any reason/motive other than supplementing the family income?

- (4) Some of you suggested that if Aarti is keen on working she could take up dress designing or embroidery and work at home. You know she has studied law - she is a barrister. Would a lawyer, say for example a male lawyer like to do that? Would a lawyer have the necessary skill, interest and aptitude to take up dress designing/embroidery professionally?
- (5) A large number of you said that Aarti should go ahead with her political career and also look after her family and home. Would Aarti have enough time and energy for both? Would that mean no time to relax? What could help her balance home and career? Or alternatively can you suggest a way to Aarti to balance home and career?
- (6) Are grandparents always free or able or willing to look after children? What if they have their own career? (It took some time for students to accept the idea that a grandmother could have her own career.)

Date : September 11, 1993
Day : Saturday
Time : 9.30 am to 11.00 am
Presentation : Oral presentation with line drawing
: on the blackboard.
Theme : Mira is a bank officer earning a
: very good salary. She meets
: Sanjeev. Sanjeev earns much less
: than Mira does but he is intelligent
: and also a very mature, good natured
: person. Mira and Sanjeev fall in
: love and they want to get married.
: Mira's parents oppose the idea of
: marriage whereas her sister advises
: her to go ahead.

Q. What should Mira do?

- (1) Marry Sanjeev.
- (2) Listen to her parents advice and not marry Sanjeev.
- (3) Any other option.

Pre-discussion voting showed 35 students in favour of position-1 which supported the marriage, 16 students voted for position-2 which did not support the marriage. None of the students voted for any other option.

Group 1 was divided into six small groups and Group 2 in to three small groups for small group discussion.

**Arguments Presented in Favour of
Position - 2**

**(Mira should listen to her parents' advice
and not marry Sanjeev)**

- (1) In future, Sanjeev will suffer from inferiority complex. He will be jealous of Mira and there will be problems in their married life.
- (2) Mira and Sanjeev will not be socially acceptable as couple. They will be victim of societal criticism and taunting from relatives which in turn will cause problems in their marriage.
- (3) The marriage will diminish the reputation of Mira's parents in society.
- (4) In affairs like marriage girls should listen to their parents. Parents' advice is always for the good of children.

Probe Questions by the Investigator

- (1) When a girl's husband earns higher salary she feels very proud but when a wife earns higher salary, there are all kinds of problems (as discussed by you). What could be the reasons? (How do you explain this situation?)
- (2) One group says that if Sanjeev's income is very low Mira can continue working. Do you suggest that she should leave work if Sanjeev has a reasonably good income?
- (3) You also say that Mira can continue working but only if