

RADAR & Indian youth



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Recently, I spoke at a national seminar hosted by the National Law University. The subject was how social scientists can and should redefine the role of women. Since it was an educational institution and had 'captive' youth, I decided not to mince words. I wanted to explain to them some basic essentials of good education.

In no time, the very students before me would be steering the country's destiny. So, what can law students, as social scientists, accomplish through meaningful interventions while in the university?

RESEARCH AND ENQUIRY

My experience has taught me that all change begins with 'research' and 'enquiry'. In the present context, it meant students linking their classroom learning with action-oriented research in the field on a regular basis. And as far as women empowerment is concerned, this implies doing research on institutions and processes which have a strong impact on the status women in our country.

So, what was stopping these law students from making research an integral part of their education? They could very well study the legal processes that directly or indirectly stop women from realising their full potential.

Have we found out why despite good laws, women do not get justice fast, or why domestic violence still rules? Why is there no strict enforcement of anti-dowry laws? What causes injustice, delays, violence, discrimination or general deprivation when it comes to gender conflicts? We all may have our own answers, but where is research?

A FEW QUESTIONS

I asked the students: "Why are students like you not going out to study ground realities? Why are institutions not making projects that have to be supported with fieldwork compulsory? Rather than mugging up textbooks, why are you not learn-



A good way to improve the status of women in our country is to do research on the institutions and processes which have a strong impact on them.

ing through experience? And if you are not going to fight it out now, when will you?"

I continued: "From research, we should move to analysis and evaluation. That is the only way we'll know the emerging trends and patterns. By correct evaluation, we can dissect the real reasons behind the trends. The academia needs to disseminate these results in the most effective and versatile manner. It could be by word of mouth, group meetings within institutions or communities. One can even use the media. Debates and seminars in universities, colleges and even schools are also a good idea. This will lead to larger awareness."

"The shared findings can now be a part of policy-making forums. These could be Panchayat people, political representatives, bureaucrats, writers, social activists, the media and other advocacy groups. This will create the much-needed public pressure to amend the laws and compel budgetary grants."

"Once research, analysis, dissemination,

and advocacy starts, it sets in motion constant review and follow-up. All useful change is always the product of review and revision."

APT ACRONYM

For easy recall of what had been said, I offered an acronym RADAR (Research-analysis-dissemination-advocacy-review).

I believe if the RADAR method becomes an integral part of our education, we will have a much enlightened and proactive youth that is sensitive. They would be complaining less and solving more. They will not be a part of the problems but solution providers.

But for that, we will have to stop spoon-feeding our youth. If RADAR method is implemented, imagine the kind of proactive citizenry we will have in the years to come. RADAR is a good route for the youth to take and it will take the country to enviable heights.