Gender Assessment of Teacher Education: Conceptual Framework

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Introduction

- Achieving gender equality calls for 'gender-sensitive policies, planning and learning environments; mainstreaming gender issues in teacher training and curricula; and eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in schools'

  Education 2030 Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2015, p. iv)

Introduction (cond.)

- Sitting in the same classroom, reading the same textbooks and listening to the same teacher, boys and girls receive very different educations (Weiss 2001)

A Case for Gender-Responsive Teacher Education

- Gender bias an obstacle to gender equality in education and beyond
- Need for gender-responsive teachers who are aware of existing gender inequalities and who can equip their students with appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes to deal with these and to make changes that lead to greater equality and respect for diversity
- Teachers a source of gender-role socialization for students – a catalyst for the promotion of gender equality
- Teachers need to be aware of structures that create differences between men and women.
- Gender studies in teacher education contributes to teachers' sensitivity to boys' and girls' needs

A Case for Gender-Responsive Teacher Education (cont'd)

- Teachers' greater understanding of gender issues will enable them to be more reflective and effective in their teaching

- A supportive teaching environment is central to girls' learning outcomes and capacity to claim rights (Lloyd et al, 2000)

- Although women are overrepresented in teaching, their voice has not dominated the profession. Integration of gender will bring women's voice forward

- Sexist teaching practices influence students' self-concept, self-esteem, curricular choices and occupational choices (Stewart et al 1990)

A Case for Gender-Responsive Teacher Education (cont'd)

- Teacher training curriculum is dominated by subject content knowledge, methodologies and philosophies of education (Molloy, 2014) and little consideration is given to the 'who' of teaching (gender identities and gender roles of teachers and students and how this influences what happens in classrooms).

- Teacher education systems promote **knowledge reproduction** based on rote learning and memorization rather than promoting **knowledge creation** based on exploration, independent thinking and questioning.

Gender Issues in Teaching: What Does the Research Say?

- Teacher-student interaction bias: male students receive more attention and teachers interact more with boys

- Teacher preference toward male students over female students has been acknowledged consistently across kindergarten (AAUW, 1992), elementary school (Irvine, 1986; Merrett & Wheldall, 1992), and high school (Duffy, Warren, & Walsh, 2001)

- Teachers apply different standards of behavior to boys and girls.

- Teachers call on and allow male students to respond to questions more frequently than female students (Hall and Sandler (1982) and interrupt male students less frequently than female students (Sadker & Sadker, 1986).

Gender Issues in Teaching:
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Gender Issues in Teaching:
What Does the Research Say? (cont'd)

- In some cultures, schools are characterized by a lack of praise for boys, and teachers give boys a disproportionate number of reprimands.

- Girls' subjection to 'stereotype threat' that results in girls' low representation in STEM fields

- Consistent pattern of stereotyping and misrepresentation of girls and women in textbooks reinforcing gender discrimination and inequalities (Blumberg, 2008).

- Gender-responsive teachers can address gender issues in the course of delivering the curriculum in the classroom (A curriculum can be as good as teachers)

Gender: A Neglected Topic in Teacher Education

- Teacher education systems train teachers as knowledge transmitters rather than transformative agents (Freire, 1970).

- A content analysis of twenty-three teacher education texts collectively devoted only about three percent of their space to gender (Zittleman and Sadker 2003) .

- A review of education policy in 40 developing countries indicated that policies to integrate gender training into teacher education remained scarce (Hunt, 2013).

- Gender issues seen as contentious and political in teacher education in Europe (Weiner, 2000).

- The OECD project (2010) 'Educating Teachers for Diversity' has noted that teacher educators themselves are not adequately prepared for the challenge of diversity.

Gender: A Neglected Topic in Teacher Education

- If teachers are not properly trained in their formative years of preparation on gender issues, they will believe that 'what is good for the boys will also be good for the girls.'

- Gender should be integral to teacher preparation.

Overarching Objective

- Assess the gender-responsiveness of pre-service teacher education systems and examine how different components of teacher education (policies, physical and institutional setup, curriculum materials, pedagogy) contribute to the preparation of gender-responsive teachers.

Specific Objectives

- Assess the overall policy and institutional context to ascertain if gender is recognized as a key policy objective in education in general and teacher education in particular;

- Examine the extent to which teacher education materials and curriculum materials used in schools are gender responsive promoting fairness, inclusion, diversity and justice;

- Examine if the pedagogical approaches and teaching learning processes/practices used in pre-service teacher education are gender responsive;

- To find out concrete policy options and actions that might contribute to integrating gender into pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Key Assessment Questions

- What is the extent to which various components (policies, curriculum materials and pedagogy) of teacher education address gender issues?

- How are teacher education systems preparing prospective teachers to be gender responsive? What are examples of good practice promoting gender equality in TEIs under scrutiny?

- What, if any, are the types of gender inequalities, gender biases, or gender discrimination that exist in teacher education systems hindering gender equality?

- What lessons can be learned in order to improve the gender responsiveness of teacher education systems?

Conceptual Framework

- **Policy Context**: How gender is situated in education in general and teacher education in particular?

- **Inputs**: Whether the material resources (textbooks, learning materials, classrooms and physical facilities) support the preparation of gender-responsive teachers?

- **Pedagogy**: Whether pedagogical approaches and processes employed in TEI classrooms promote gender equality?

- **Outcomes**: Examine the teacher education institution's overall response to gender issues: i) gender-blind or gender-negative, ii) gender-sensitive or gender-aware, and iii) gender-transformative.

Methodology/Design

- Regional initiative five countries participating in the assessment
- Collaborative action research with policy makers and key actors in teacher education working collaboratively in analyzing gender issues in teacher education
- Extensive institutional analysis of teacher education institutions and national curriculum development authorities

Methodology/Design (cont'd)

- Textual analysis of curriculum materials (what is used in pre-service teacher preparation and what they will use as teachers when they graduate)

- Analysis of gender dynamics in teacher education classrooms

- Triangulation – data from multiple sources and methods in order to enhance accuracy and validity

- Basic design remains constant across countries to facilitate a regional synthesis and comparative analysis

Sampling Method and Sample Size: Institutional/Individual Respondents

Teacher Education Institution (TEI)	- Five TEIs per country - Three TEIs that prepare primary teachers and two engaged in secondary teacher preparation - Convenient sample of five institutions selected on the basis of accessibility - Factors such as location (rural/urban and provincial location), size (small, medium or large) and ownership type (public/private) can be considered in the selection - Data will be gathered from the heads or deputy heads or any other person designated by the heads.
Observation of gender dynamics in classrooms	- At least 10 teacher educators representing major areas of studies such as languages, science and mathematics, social studies, general education classes, health and physical education, etc. - Equal representation of male and female educators, where relevant - Two observations per teacher educator (repeat observation)

Sampling Method and Sample Size: Institutional/Individual Respondents (cont'd)

Curriculum Development Boards/Authorities	- From each country, the <u>national curriculum board/authority</u> responsible for developing curriculum materials for <u>schools</u> will be included in the assessment exercise.
Curriculum and textbook writers	- From every country at least ten school textbooks writers or materials developers will be selected. - Where applicable, they can be selected using criteria such as sex, area of specialization (languages, sciences, social sciences), focus area (education/non-education) or ownership (public/private).

Content Analysis of Teacher Education Texts: Scope/Text Category

- Curriculum or syllabus or course of study designed for primary and secondary pre-service teacher training;

- Teacher guides/handbooks or any other materials such as lesson plans designed to support/facilitate the work of teacher educators;

- Text materials (textbooks, guide books) used by teacher trainees in various subject areas whether published by the teacher education institution itself or by the private sector;

- School textbooks in core subject areas (Languages, Social Studies, Science and Math, health and physical education);

- Assessment papers (test materials) whether developed by teacher educators themselves or produced by the private sector available in the market.

- Officially prescribed texts (whether published locally or internationally)

Text Sampling and Size

Text Category	Selection	Number of Documents for Review
Curriculum or syllabus or course of study	Depending on how curriculum is organized, primary teacher training and secondary teacher training curriculum limiting to pre-service training.	2 sets
Teacher guides/materials specifically designed for teacher educators	Materials representing four subject areas for each level (Educational studies, languages, science and math and social science)	8 sets
Text materials for trainee teachers	Materials representing four subject areas for each level (Educational studies, languages, science and social science)	8 sets
School textbooks	Textbooks prescribed for 1, 3, 5 and 8 in four subject areas for each grade	16 sets
Assessment papers used by TEIs (last three years)	Materials representing four subject areas for each level (Math, language, science and social science)	8 sets

Content Review Process

- Two-stage review
    - In the first stage, the reviewers will give a cursory look at the selected text material in order to make sure that the document contains the data that the reviewer is looking for.
    - Then, the second stage review starts whereby the reviewer performs a careful reading/observation of the document and takes note of the characteristics/features of the text material using the designated tool.
- The tool should be completed by the members of country research team who are designated and trained to review the materials.

Assessment Instruments and Mode of Administration

Tool	Data to be collected	Method of administration
Teacher education institution survey tool	This instrument will gather background information of the sampled teacher education institution covering aspects such as institutional context, physical learning environment, facilities, enrollment patterns, staffing patterns or any other issues linked to gender equality.	Self-administered by the respondent
Survey instrument for curriculum development authorities	The instrument will examine the role of gender in curriculum development structures and processes. Questions of key interest would be what policies guide curriculum development, who takes curricular decisions and how participatory are these processes.	heads or deputies of national curriculum development authorities.
Survey instrument for curriculum developers/textbook writers	This tool will gather information from curriculum developers/textbook writers about their demographic information, professional preparation, textbook development process and their views about gender issues.	Self-administered
Classroom observation tool	This tool will be used to observe classrooms to gather data on pedagogical practices, classroom arrangements, teacher-student interactions, etc.	Administered by the research team
Gender assessment of TLMs	Gender representation and biasness in text materials	Reviewers

Pre-Testing of Instruments

- Translate the entire set of instruments into the country's official language
- Following the training of reviewers, arrange for a pre-testing of instruments on a small sample to validate the clarity and avoid any ambiguities
- Ensure that potential respondents are able to self-administer the instruments

Data Collection Process

- Each country forms a four-member national team comprising officials from the Ministry of Education, TEIs, curriculum development boards/authorities and the GFP

- The national team coordinates and leads the implementation of the project with the support of UNESCO Field Office

- Additional members drawn from TEIs and curriculum boards to join the country team

- Countries can opt for engaging a lead researcher for any required technical support

- Maintain a gender balance ensuring equal representation of male and female members

Data Collection Process (cont'd)

- Organize an intensive orientation training programme to orient/train the reviewers

- Seek informed consent (oral or written) from the respondents prior to administration of instruments

- Ensure that the purpose of the whole exercise is understood, including how the data provided by respondents will be used

- Contact who are in gatekeeping role

- Obtain a support letter from MOE and UNESCO, if needed

- Ensure respondents of confidentiality and anonymity

- Participation in the assessment is voluntary and the respondent has every right to quit at any point

Data Collection Process (cont'd)

- Review the completed instruments early on to ensure that they are properly done

- Contact the respondents if some items are left out or vital information is missing

- Be available to provide any clarifications or explanations that the respondents may ask for

- Maintain a daily logbook and take note of any informal comments, observations or any statements that respondents may make or record any other incident/point that could be of interest to the study

Documentation of Best Practices

- Any successful initiative or innovative programme designed and implemented by countries should be recorded

- Provide a complete 'storyline' describing what was done, how and with what results and how it is being sustained

Data Processing and Analysis

- All completed instruments should be carefully reviewed for their usability and completeness

- All items will be pre-coded

- Open-ended questions will be post-coded

- A template should be prepared to enter data using the available programme

- Frequency tables and descriptive statistics should be calculated for purpose of reporting disaggregated based on sex and other variables of interest

Limitations

- Initial, exploratory work with no intent to make broad generalizations
- Findings are subject to further verification and investigation
- Researchers need to be aware of positive response bias/tendency to provide socially desirable or politically correct answer
- Gender equated with women and girls and seen as a binary issue

Reporting and Dissemination

- Each country prepares a national report using the data gathered by the team

- The report should be reviewed internally by the country team members and shared with others for external review

- A national dissemination workshop will be organized to share the findings, conclusions and recommendations

- Each country provides datasets to UNESCO Bangkok for the preparation of a regional synthesis report

Thank you!