

## Teacher's role model in gender education of students

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### Abstract

Gender education as an important part of education, affects by the role and attitudes of teachers. Including gender perspective in schools is a prerequisite in alienable of human development, instead insuring gender equality it is considered as respecting human rights. Elimination of the gender stereotypes has a two-fold significance since it ensures gender equality not only in the school system but even in the society as a whole.

Gender stereotype messages, regardless by hidden or displayed form, unilaterally influence the development of the personality in its appearance as well as the formation of the individual. Children learn about gender identity simply by observing what happens in different circumstances around. In education exist gender disparities, which can be assessed by means of measurable indicators. So, the content of the curricula and instructive texts, the interactive relationships teacher-students, the institutional ambiance, etc. play an important role into the preservation and transmission of the gender disparity stereotypes through the messages they convey.

The purpose of the study is to perform a systematic research in order to show the scale and shape in which gender stereotypes are portrayed and shown in social life, even through the role model of teacher and their affecting the education for a democratic society. To achieve this goal, we use the method of studying the existing literature; a detailed analysis of the questionnaires and interviews content with school directors and teachers of pre-university education in city: Shkodër, Tiranë, Elbasan, Pogradec, Korçë. Parents and teachers attitudes, seems to be a role model and affect the education of students. Therefore it is necessary before to teach students about gender equality, teachers need to be careful in their behavior about gender equality as an integral part of thinking. Need to have successful teacher, to get successful students otherwise should be successful students to get the advantage of a successful society (Fullan, 2002, 53).

**Keywords:** *Gender education, role model, stereotypes, attitudes, institutional area.*

### Goal of the Study

The scope of the study is to emphasize the profile and the level of presentation in which gender stereotypes are portrayed in school social life, through teacher's role model. Evidently we could see the role of teachers in gender education. The study emphasizes the need for interaction as well as the continuously efforts between the stakeholders in education to create models for avoiding gender stereotypes.

### Methodology

The study of literature of the total interdependent factors have been used in purpose of comparing trends, to collect arguments which support and help the identification of teacher's role-model. Those who directly and indirectly affects on gender education of

students.

To carry out the study, had been used qualitative analysis based on data obtained from semi-structured questionnaires and interviews with teachers and heads of schools included in the study.

### **Sampling and population of the study**

Sampling is so important in qualitative studies, particularly for sensitive ones in gender education. In these cases, the study must be careful and aware of the number of participants with the scope to select a group of respondents which seems to be more representative in the study population (Gerson, 2002, p. 33). In general, sampling in qualitative research is smaller than in quantitative research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 469).

The sample on which gathered data has a wide geographic spread, including Shkodra, Tirana, Elbasan, Pogradec, Korce, in order to compare precisely the trends in this study. Intentional sampling, selected for this study related to such requirements as:

- a. To maintain the numerical equality of teachers participants including three levels of education: primary, secondary as well as high education. Maintaining gender equality among teachers is difficult because the teaching profession is dominated by girls/ women.
- b. For executives, managerial staff including: directors and ass/directors of participating schools, regardless by level of education which they teach. It was analyzed teacher's opinion about the integration of gender education in the educational process. The types and number of stakeholders contacted, 350 teachers and 25 headmasters.

### **Methods of data collection**

To accomplish the purpose of the study have been used a combined methodology of content analysis, quantitative and qualitative analysis of questionnaires and interviews with teachers. Collecting data was held in the school's premises: for questionnaires, without the presence of the researcher and face to face interview with the teachers. Quantitative data collected through questionnaires. They are processed with statistical program SPSS version 20, which allows comparability of data.

Coding: The coding was used to preserve anonymity, grouping the teachers by education level where they teach.

### **Introduction**

Through educational process we can pass and minimize the issues on the gender imbalance as well as other social groups (UNDP, 2005).

Gender's stereotypes issues in the educational system constitutes a major concern because of the potential negative effects on students. To assess the integration of students in gender education, besides studying the curricula and textbooks, it seems to be necessary observation of the teacher's role in educational process. The role of teachers is especially important for young students, for how they establish standards of thinking about right or wrong issues. The teacher's attitudes and behaviors, can exchange the most normal

situations in the textbook in a sexist text and vice versa. On the other hand, teachers improve in students, problem solving capacity in these types of situations.

### **Theoretical aspect**

The goals of the educational system reflect community values (Pratt, 1984). There is bound to take shape stereotype of preaching.

The creation of gender identity is not only part of the official program, but it is attained indirectly through the hidden curriculum. The way how teachers and schools transmit gender stereotypes, is wellknown as the "hidden curriculum". In fact, school teachers tend to promote "feminine" features, rather "male" ones because of disciplinary issues (Fagot, 1984). Generally the teachers expect bad behavior from boys more than girls. But they also expect that boys have more academic achievement than girls. In general, boys get more attention from teachers than girls (Golombok, 1994).

Teachers can conduct gender breakdown while performing some tasks separately for boys and girls. Boys efforts often include more physical strength or mechanical skills. It is not yet proven whether boys are actually more creative than girls, but the hidden message given by the teacher is clear: there are activities that boys can do, while girls can't (Burns, 1994).

Young students are looking for gender identity models: Who makes this kind of activity? Who plays with whom, as well as the differences between girls and boys (Martin, Ruble, & Szkrybalo, 2004, p. 69). Children can easily notice that most of the teachers, especially in primary schools are women, while most of the managers are men (Berk, 2003, p. 569).

In the upper years of education, girls are more likely to be imposed in their identity status for professional and family choice, and the guys on the status of confusion (Karaj, 2005, p. 314). Besides curriculum, teacher play an important role. In fact, teachers are the ones who interpret the curriculum and knowledges, filtered through their own lens. They encourage students to see the world as they do. Experience shows that each teacher applies its own way, how he/ she interprets the intentions of the text authors by his/ her model. As well as they do regarding relationships and gender identities. A nonsexist text can be sexist in the focus of a teacher with sexist attitudes (Sunderland, 2006, p. 151). Treating children by equal approach, can reduce and at the same time made them critical of gender bias in textbooks.

In the perspective of creating knowledge and attitudes about gender stereotypes, the teachers should highlight the exceptions in stereotype models in society, discussing about the unrealistic stereotypes about girls and boys in the media. He/ she can explain to students that gender stereotypes lead to gender inequality, as well as other consequences of stereotypes. The chance to be open minded about gender, enabling the students to be agents of change towards a world without gender differences (Berk, 2003, p. 532).

Researchers point out gender bias as various forms of discrimination in educational system, as manifestation of the hidden curriculum, including: systematic bias against girls; dominating attitude toward women; a potential limitation of responsibility on girls; continued stereotypes (Kabira & Masinjila, 1987, Sadker & Zittlman, 2008).

### Results of the study

Statistical data obtained from questionnaires conducted teachers in pre-graduating education at all three levels are shown graphically as follows:

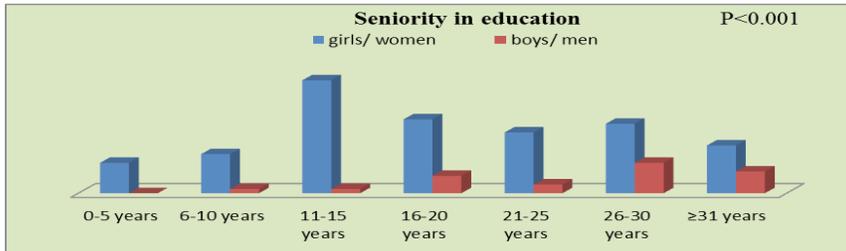


Chart 1: Seniority of teacher in education

The graphic represent the dominance of girls/ women according to age group. Percentage of age in work for girls/ women is 11-15 years and boys/ men 26-30 years. Increasing the age for boys/ men shows that teaching is not a common profession by the last two decades.

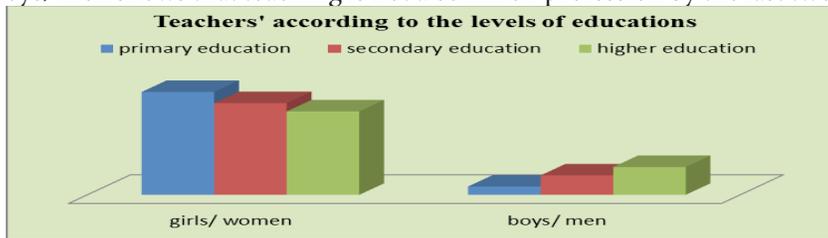


Chart 2: The relations of teacher gender according to the levels of educations

According to the levels of education it seems a decrease trend in the number of girls/ women teachers who teach in primary, secondary education and higher education, while the number of boys/ men is incremental. The largest percentage as a teacher in primary education consists of girls/ women, boys/ men do not prefer to work on students' group-ages 6 to 12 years, coincides with the age of children in primary education. Therefore, often in our own imagination, figure of primary teacher is a girl/ woman.

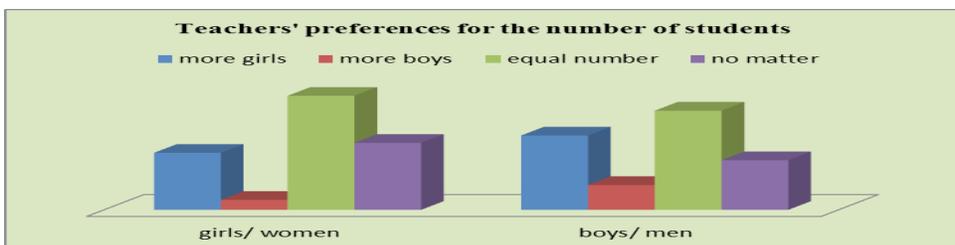


Chart 3: The teachers' preferences according students' number per gender

Teachers' exhibit similar preferences for the number of students by gender. They prefer to have an equal number of students. Girls/ women teachers with 7:00% more than boys/

men teacher stated that the gender of the student didn't matter. Men teachers almost prefer girls in their class, because of the quietness and their self-control, much more than boys, creating in this meaning no disciplinary problems. For the same reason, girls/women teachers compared to boys/ men teacher prefer smaller number of boys in class.

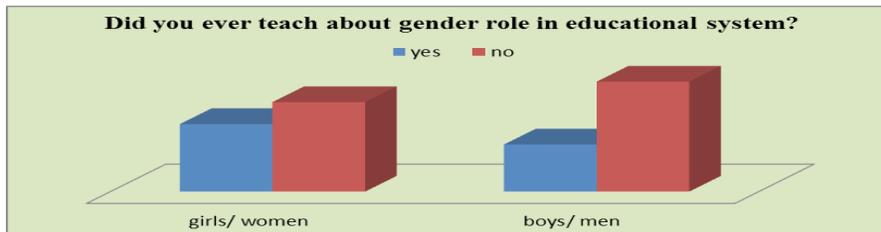


Chart 4: Teacher's knowledge about gender role during the years of education.

During the years of education 59.17% of the teachers have not received complete information about gender education. Girls/ women tend to be 1.4 times more than boys/ men informed on gender education. Unfortunately this doesn't affect women teachers increasing their role in the elimination of gender stereotypes. They seems to be more affected by the stock that society provides.

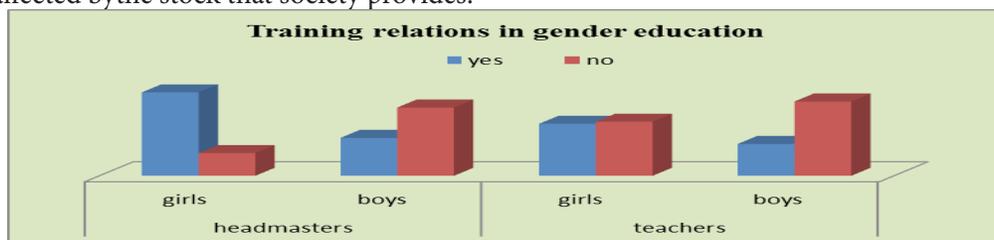


Chart 5: Training relations in gender education

Training plays an important role in enhancing professionalism regarding teachers. Thinking about training by gender perspective according to leaders women/men consequently brings gender division. 2/3 of women leaders declares they are committed training in their schools, while 1/3 of leading men share the same opinion. 51.00% of teachers women say that they get trained. Completely different men teacher 70.00% declares they didn't get trained in gender education.

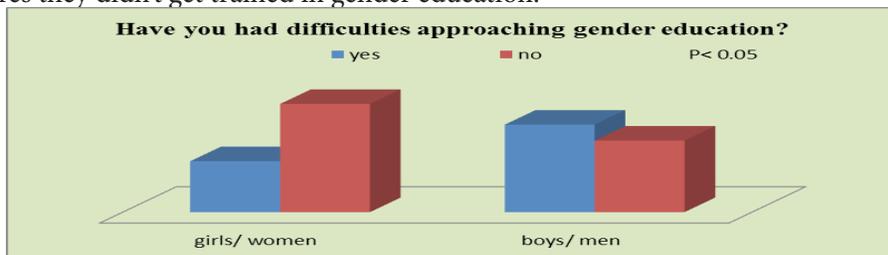


Chart 6: Gender relations according difficulties faced by teachers in gender approaching

A difficulty in approaching gender education according to teachers seems to appear in

a ratio of 1 to 3. So 1/3 of the teachers claimed to get difficulties. It seems to have gender division among teachers: teachers' men claim themselves in difficulties approaching gender education 1.7 times more than women teachers. The lack of information during the years of education and gender role models offered by society consequently leads in difficulties much more teachers men.

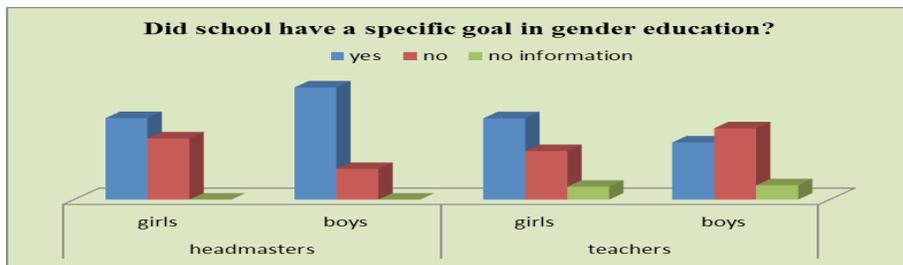


Chart 7: Ratio regarding specific goals in gender education by headmasters and teachers

Educational policies suggest that schools should have specific goal regarding the approaches in gender education. By the opinions of headmasters and teachers indicate deficiency regarding the problem. 3/5 of them declares schools to have a specific goal, and 1/3 express the opposite. Leaders men, more than women leaders, declares themselves positively way, it means have specific goals for gender education in their schools. Teachers share ideas by corresponding gender: women claims positive attitudes with 17.00% more than men, 9.00% of them have no information. And 50.00% of men claim negative attitudes and 10% say they have no information.

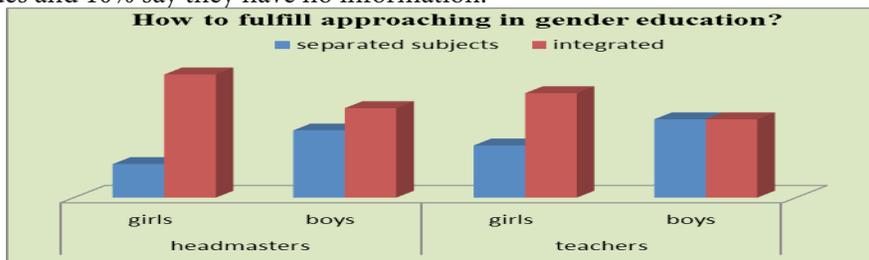


Chart 8: The ratio regarding approaching in gender education according teachers and headmasters

Approaching in gender education accepted as the best way of 2/3 of teachers and school leaders, 1/3 of them declare to fulfill the goal in separated subjects, mainly in social studies. More women than men say that approaching in a focus is the best way. Teacher men share 50% to 50% of opinion between the two ways of achieving the approach and only 14.00% declares the approaching gender education as the best way to fulfill the purpose.

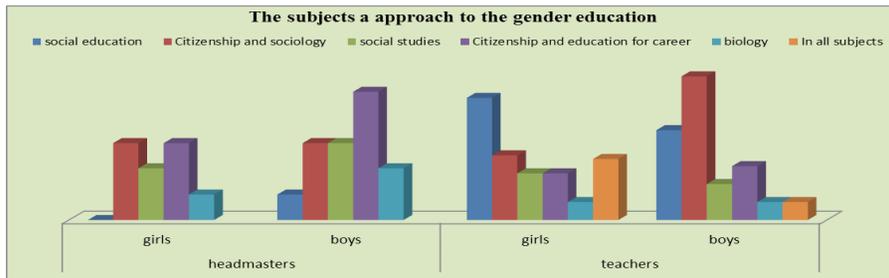


Chart 9: The subjects a approach to the gender education

Teachers and headmasters declaredifferent opinions according the subjects which provide opportunities for approaching in gender education. At the other hand regardless their gender, leaders declares for such subjects as: social studies, citizenship and sociology offers a lot of opportunities for mainstreaming. Women teachers and principals declare that Social Education provides more opportunities approaching gender education. A men teacher in high level declares the Citizenship, sociology and education provides more opportunities in career.

## Discussion

Different theoretical approaches (Michel, 1986) claim that the first sign of sexism is the presence of stereotypes, and the second one seems to be uncritical attitudes toward gender stereotypes. It appears that these two characters are present in both factors: textbooks as well as teachers as active actors in implementation of gender education. Students under the guidance of teachers develop their behaviors and at the same time reflect their attitudes to gender issues presented in texts and specific situations in school area.

Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews helped in interpreting the findings according preferences and trends that teachers highlighted during teaching process. Data about seniority of the teachers participating in the study indicate that teaching is a favorite profession mostly by girls/ women, especially in primary education, where boys/ men generally do not choose. They declare: "Dealing with young students is not easy", "Work with young students requires patience, takes time ...", "Payment in education is low". Therefore, our images as teachers of primary education are the statue of the girl/ woman. At secondary level of education boys/ men teachers are fewer in number especially in such subjects as physical education, physics, music education. Increasing the age of seniority for boys/ men shows that education is not the profession they would like to exercise by at least two decades. Prominently displayed gendering profession during the interpretation of data at all levels of education where they teach. Therefore we say that teaching is a gendering profession, dominated by girls/ women. A teacher, regardless of their gender, seems to appear the same preference and argue the same expressing the opinions regarding the number of students by gender. The preferences for equal number of students are not so important as well as gender of the students. Opinions shared that: Girls seems to be quiet, show self-control more than boys and bring fewer disciplinary problems in schools. The lack of information during the years of education, as well as the lack of training on

specific purpose about stereotyped patterns offered by society make possible that men teachers, shows much more difficulties than women teachers in gender mainstreaming in teaching and learning process. Students seem to be much more influenced by models that offer society regarding gender education. Besides improving the use of textbooks and teaching strategies approaching gender education, interpretative skills required by teachers in this process. These skills requires knowledge and attitudes, which bring the necessity of education and training of teachers on gender education At the other hand to assess the impact of curricula, as well as a better understanding of gender inequality we interpret data through situations and illustrations in textbooks and their effect on the education.

The lack of specific goal in gender education, identified as well by reports, engender the issue of controversy about the implementation of the millennium third objective, promotion of gender equality (MFA, 2015, p. 1). Approaching gender education including such subjects: Social Education, Citizenship, Psychology and Career improve the specific goal we are looking for.

Teachers as part of society where gender stereotypes are shaped as well do not have an easy way in changing their attitudes. Need help to eliminate gender stereotypes and improving gender equality. Indeed it brings benefits for themselves and their students as well. Maintaining gender equality in education, need to fulfill the goals of comprehensive education as well as rear the efforts for gender equality. This should be clearly identified through strategies of educational policy in our country (MAS, 2015).

### **Findings**

- Gendering the profession and the role model of teachers in schools, impacts as well improving gender education, especially for girls.
- Lack of knowledge about gender education in curriculum of teacher training faculties.
- Specific training on the education regarding treatment of gender issues for teachers at all levels of education.
- Lack of specific goal according gender education in schools.

### **Recommendations**

Increasing responsibility in gender education seems to have more specific purpose:

- Increasing awareness in promoting gender equality in the educational process.
- Approaching the topic of gender education in a wide range by curriculum including all subjects as part of this aim.
- Training teachers to identify and critically assess the gender stereotypes shown or hiding in the social school environment and beyond.
- Giving clear guidance on the methodology in treating gender stereotypes by promoting gender equality should be the aim of training.

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