

Gender equality in peer groups

Better social climate is characterized by several crucial features including respect and equality between girls and boys, who attend usually sex-mixed schools and classrooms. The coeducational environment can emphasize both gender stereotypes and gender equality as well. It depends mainly on teachers whether equal or unequal conditions of schooling (involving formal curriculum, pedagogical communication, evaluation, career choices, peers relationships) will dominate.

It needs to enforce some changes to establish gender equal environment in classes. Firstly, teachers must aware of gender stereotypes and accept gender equality as a value for schooling. Secondly, teachers should support informal curriculum free of stereotypes and use specific projects or partial activities for students to awake to negative impacts of gender stereotypes and put new communication rules into peer groups.

I and my colleagues realize research projects focused on efficiency of school activities targeting gender equality. The activities can be divided in three big groups according their main goal: 1) awareness of gender stereotypes in society and specifically in school, 2) future plans and career choices without gender stereotypes, 3) relationships within and across girls and boys groups.

All three topics are in the foreground of my research and practical interest. In last projects I am focused mainly on field of gender biased bullying in peer groups. Relationships with peers are a natural context for development of identity, including gender identity. In many groups exist gender stereotypes (and other kinds of stereotypes) which negatively influence process of gender identity formation. Students in early adolescence tend to bully others who don't fit to traditional gender conceptions of femininity and masculinity (e.g. boys who are physically week and not interested in typical masculine activities). Special issue is homophobic bias of peer bullying which can be addressed to students with non-heterosexual orientation or to students who are different in some way and are named as lesbian or gay to hurt them.

There were two aims of my last projects. First goal was to examine the evidence of amount and forms of gender biased bullying in adolescent school groups. Second aim was to develop and verify some activities which can be used by teachers in groups with impair relations (e.g. finishing of scenarios, making of stories, list of celebrities, counterfeit discussions about ambivalent topics). All activities were created on experience with solving bullying in peer groups and were tested in real groups. I would like to show those activities during the conference.

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Education:

Mgr. (psychology and pedagogy), Faculty of Education, Charles University, Prague, 2000

Mgr. (sociology), Faculty of Philosophy, Charles University, Prague, 2002

Ph.D. (pedagogical psychology), Faculty of Education, Charles University, Prague, 2008

Work experience:

2005 – today: Assistant professor, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Education, Charles University, Prague

2002 – 2005: Researcher, Institute of School Assessment – Institute of Information in Education, Prague

2000 – 2004: Psychologist, Center for Psychological Counselling in Education, Prague 10

Annotation of the main projects carried out in the last five years:

Co-researcher in the project Sexual harassment in university environment, which is being solved within the subproject Human Resources of the National Research Program II of the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic (March 2008 – December 2009).

Manager of the subproject "Education" in the project Breaking Waves, which was financed from the EU initiative EQUAL (September 2005 – June 2008). Recipient of the project: Open Society, o.p.s. The project involves drafting handbooks to be used by management of schools and school counselors and courses for the same target groups. The aim was to promote gender sensitivity of teachers.

Manager and main researcher of the research project Gender Aspects of Transitions between School Levels, which was realized by Institute of Sociology and financed from the Ministry of Education (2003 – 2005). Research was focused on gender stereotypes both in students choices of their studying careers and in teachers attitudes reflected on entrance examinations and following treatments of accepted applicants. Research methodology consists of questionnaire survey (3000 students) and interviews (40 teachers and 120 students). Report from the research for internal using of Ministry of Education: Smetáčková, I. (ed.) (2005). *Genderové aspekty přechodu žáků a žákyň mezi vzdělávacími stupni*. Výzkumná zpráva. Praha: SOÚ AV ČR.

Manager of the project Gender in School, which was financed by Open Society Fund, Prague (2003-2006). The project involves drafting two handbooks of gender perspective for teachers.

Co-researcher of the project Analysis of remuneration of women and men in Education, which was financed by the Foundation Open Society Fund (May 2004 – May 2005). Recipient: Open Society, o.p.s.

Co-author of the Shadow Reports in the Field of Equal Treatment and Equal Opportunities of Women and Men (chapters about gender equality in education), which was financed by the Foundation Open Society Fund. Recipient: Open Society, o.p.s. – 2004, 2006, 2008.

Publications:

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Gregr, D.; Levínská, M.; Smetáčková, I. (2008). République tchèque. Transformation des politiques d'équité en période post-communiste. In *Les politiques d'éducation prioritaire suédoise en période de décentralisation et d'individualisation*. Lyon: Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique. ISBN 978-2-7342-1121-1.

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