

Teaching Strategies for Implementation of Gender Quality Education and Role of Curriculum Education

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Abstract

Then best educational environment are those that are fair to all students, male or female. In many places around the world, female and male students do not always have the same chances for a good education. This paper examined the various teaching strategies necessary for balancing gender learning education. It also prefers solution to this contemporary problem. The role of curriculum educators towards enhancing gender quality education was also discussed. The paper further recommended among others; that government should be alive to their responsibilities particularly in providing enabling environment for promoting gender party; parents, teachers and guardians must discharge their duties loyally and diligently.

Key words: Gender equality, Teaching Strategies, Education, Curriculum educators

Introduction

As educated individual is more likely to grow up healthy and have more opportunities for employment. This increases their chances of raising healthy children and supporting them to also get an education (Clarke, 2005). When all students both male and female have equal access to educational opportunities, the results impact future generations. Creating more equal educational opportunities for students being in the classroom and with the teacher. A strong teacher is one who treats their students fairly and creates an environment where students feel equally able to take part.

Teachers can create the appearance of gender bias through unintentional, non verbal actions. The first step to correcting this problem is to organize your classroom in a way that makes all students feel equal.

Teaching Strategies for Implementation of Gender Equality Education

There is a direct relationship between the kind of learning environment teachers create in their classrooms and student achievement. Here are some specific strategies for developing the optimal classroom climate and culture.

- **Address Student Needs**

Remember that students, like adults, have not only physical needs but also important psychological needs for security and order, love and belonging, personal power and competence, freedom, novelty, and fun. Students are driven to meet all of these needs all the time, not just two or three of them. When teachers intentionally address these needs in the classroom, students are happier to be there, behavior incidents occur far less frequently, and student engagement and learning increases (Myrers, 2007).

- **Create a Sense of Order**

All students need structure and want to know that their teacher not only knows his content area, but also knows how to manage his classroom (Nayler, 2007). It is the teacher's responsibility to provide clear behavioural and academic expectations right from the beginning – students should know what is expected of them all the time. Another important way to create a sense of order is by teaching students effective procedures for the many practical tasks that are performed in the classroom. For example, teach students how to:

- Enter the classroom and become immediately engaged in a learning activity
- Distribute and collect materials;
- Find out about missed assignments due to absence and how to make them up
- Get the teacher's attention without disrupting the class and
- Arrange their desks quickly and quietly for various purposes: in rows facing the front for direct instruction, in pairs for collaborative learning, in groups of fours for cooperative learning, and in a large circle for class discussions.

iii. **Get to Know your Students**

The more you know about your students' cultures, interests co-curricular activities, personalities, learning styles, goals, and mindsets, the better you can reach them and teach them (Skelton, 2009). Some ways of getting to know your students are:

- Educate yourself about their cultures
- Talk to them
- Assign journal prompts and read and respond to them
- Attend co-curricular events

- Have students complete interest inventories or surveys
- Have students complete learning style and personality assessments
- Hold regular class meeting
- Play team-building games with students

iv. Avoid Judging

When students feel like they are being judged, pigeonholed, and/or labeled, they distrust the person judging them. It is hard not to judge a student who just sits there doing no school work after you have done everything you can to motivate her. It is easy to see how we might call such students lazy and label the student who is constantly provoking and threatening peers as a bully. But judging and labeling students is not only a way to shirking our responsibility to teach them ("There's nothing I can do with Jonny. He's simply incorrigible."), but it also completely avoid the underlying problem. Instead of judging students, be curious. Ask why (Where is this fear or hostility coming from?) Once you uncover the underlying reason for the behavior, that issue can be dealt with directly, avoiding all the time and energy it takes to cajole, coerce, and give consequences to students.

v. Employ Class-Building Games and Activities

It is important to develop positive relationships with your students; it is equally important to develop positive relationship among them. One of the best ways to break down the cliques within a classroom and help shy or new students feel a sense of belonging is to engage students in non competitive games and cooperative learning structures. According to Ringrose (2012), there are hundreds of resources online and in books that provide thousands of appropriate choices for your grade level. Another benefit of bringing play into the classroom is that it gives your students a very powerful reason to come to your class. It is fun.

vi. Be Vulnerable

Being vulnerable develops trust faster than any other approach. Admitting your mistakes show that you are human and makes you more approachable. It also sends the message that it is okay to make mistakes in this classroom. That is how to learn. Maxwell (2010) said that vulnerability and public self-evaluation also help develop a growth mindset culture: We embrace mistakes rather than try to avoid them at all costs. We learn from those mistakes and grow. Make a simple mistake, like spilling a glass of water or misspelling a word on the board, and instead of making excuses, talk about how you made that mistake, because it taught you something.

vii. Celebrate Success

A celebration is a spontaneous event meant to recognize an achievement. It is not hinted at or promised ahead of time like "if -you -do-this-then-you-get-that" reward. Instead, you might set a class goal, such as the whole class achieving 80 percent or higher on an assessment. Chart students' progress on a wall chart (percentages, not individual names). After each assessment, discuss the strategies, processes, or study habits that students used to be successful and what they learned and might do to improve on the next assessment. Once the class has achieved the goal, hold a celebration. It does not need to be a three-ring circus. Showing some funny or interesting (appropriate) online videos, bringing in cupcakes or playing some non competitive games would suffice. The next time you set a class goal and students ask if you are going to celebrate again tell them, not necessarily. It really is not about the cupcakes, it is about the effort and learning.

Ways to Promote Gender Equality in the Classroom

a. Be Reflective and be Objective

First, the teacher should pay attention to the trends above and do your best to offer more gender-neutral responses to students.

You may feel like you already do a good of this, but it can be difficult to judge your own teaching objectively. It may help to record a video of your classroom in order to take a closer look at your own teaching methods and interactions with students.

b. Get Feedback from Colleagues and Students

Consider getting feedback from colleagues on any differences they may notice that you don't. Further, consider getting similar feedback from the students themselves using an anonymous comment box.

Consider Questions such as:

Do you notice differences in how I treat boys and girls?

What do I need to know about you, in terms of gender, to teach you well?

Have I made you feel good or bad in regard to your gender at any point?

c. Use Gender-Neutral Language when Appropriate

Teachers can also alter the language within his/her lessons to help expand students' perspectives beyond gender stereotypes

For example, in assignments he/she can challenge students' expectations by including a female construction worker or soldier, a male secretary or nurse, and

other professions typically associated with a particular gender also, when referring to the group as a whole, avoid using gendered terms like 'guys', which may make female students feel excluded. Instead, reach for gender-neutral pronouns like 'everyone'.

Similarly, you shouldn't refer to stereotypical characteristics like 'boys don't cry' or 'girls don't fight.' This language lays a foundation that may limit students' understanding of gender roles.

d. Explain the Context.

If you hear students using phrases like 'you play like a girl' or 'man up', it is important to point out the social implications of these statements rather than simply admonishing the use of that kind of phrasing.

The struggle for and history of gender equity parallels similar struggles and histories for race and religious equity. Clarke (2005) opined that understanding how individuals and groups become marginalized through the most basic of cultural tools like language can, depending on the grade level of your students, is more important than having 'clear rules' to simply 'protect students' from bias.

e. Seat and Group Students Intentionality

It is common for boys and girls to segregate when choosing friends and seating arrangements. Teachers sometimes encourage this by asking girls and boys to form separate lines in the hallway or even organizing separate sports activities for each group. By creating a dynamic seating chart, you can break up boys or girls only cliques and encourage both groups to engage with each other.

f. Use Project-Based Learning

A teacher can also be intentional about integrating a mix of boys and girls within small group projects.

The work can be purely academic, with the lessons on gender equality indirect and implicit. By working together, girls and boys can "if supported well" better understand the nuisance of individual behaviours rather than stereotyping 'girls' and 'boys'.

Projects can also be created to explore concepts in and around gender and cultural equity, or to do work in selected spaces and communities to nurture the growth of healthy human interdependence.

Promoting Gender Equality in Schools

Promoting equality and inclusion are generally seen to be part of the work of schools and other educational bodies. There has been an important and significant focus on race equality over the years, but an understanding of what the promotion of gender equality should mean and how to go about doing this is less well developed.

Some ideas of promoting gender equality in education are:

- Ensure equal and fair representation of men and women at all levels across the school (male teaching assistants, female head teachers and other senior managers).
- Develop initiatives that promote young women to follow post-compulsory education and career trajectories which will facilitate higher earnings in the future.
- Identify who is becoming disengaged from education and is likely to do less well than hoped – and develop support strategies to tackle this.
- Challenge stereotypical, either/or understandings of what it means to be male and female-across the whole school community (parents/careers, staff, students).
- Have clear and consistently followed procedures for identifying/reporting sexual bullying and violence against women and girls.

In order to do the above school communities need the support and training to engage with the concept of gender and reflect on how imbued our day-to-day reflections and actions are with a relatively narrow understanding of sex and gender, and to see and appreciate the many ways gender inequality is reinforced at so many levels throughout our educational spaces.

Role of Curriculum Educators/Teachers in Promoting Equity in the Classroom

- As a curriculum educator, we are in a position to call out examples of gender stereotyping and encourage students to question and dispute them. This might be through highlighting examples in teaching materials or through calling out students' comments and behaviour
- Curriculum educators should ensure that the classroom is an ideal environment to raise their awareness of those stereotypes and encourage critical analysis in students so they are equipped to come to their own informed conclusions;

- Curriculum educators should encourage students to question gendered examples in textbooks and instructional materials. Students should be encouraged to consider textbooks authored by women versus men, to analyse the roles men versus women fill in fictional characters in literature texts. Mathematics or Sociology classes can provide an opportunity to look at Australian statistics in areas such as gender pay gaps, or gender-bias in careers and employment;
- Teachers should rebuke sexist statements from students, such as “you kick like a girl”, “man up or “get back to the kitchen” it is important to discuss what these phrases mean and their consequences. Many students will use this language without intending insult, so it is important to prompt them to think about the underlying message and the impact their comments have, as opposed to simply reprimanding or ‘banning’ such talk;
- challenge traditional male and female stereotypes when giving examples to students, e.g. ‘a female soldier’ or ‘a male nurse’;
- When you see/hear examples of gender stereotypes use them as an opportunity for ‘teachable moments’ and ask students to discuss what they mean and why they use them;
- Aim to use gender neutral language (e.g. it, their, they);
- Avoid statements that generalize, ‘girls tend to ...’ or ‘boys are more’.
- Don’t limit what you ask your students to do, e.g. ask female students to carry sports equipment;
- Consider the way you interact with students and avoid being, for example, ‘blokey with boys or ‘gentle’ with girls. Instead, interact in the way you would expect them to in the real world’
- Actively encourage students to engage in activities that might sit outside their gender’s comfort-zones (e.g. sports, dance, drama etc).
- Take note of how often you draw on either males or females to answer different types of questions and make an effort to rectify any inequity;
- Encourage mixed gender group work and seating arrangements;
- Use examples of gender inequity to inform your lesson e.g. looking at statistics on the gender pay gap for a mathematics lesson, or looking at examples of inequity throughout history and how things may or may not have changed;
- actively discuss and analyze sexist advertising images and the media’s representation of men and women and
- Without highlighting that they are not ‘acting like blokes/girls’, actively encourage students when they do challenge gender roles

Conclusion

One of the greatest hurdles to supporting teachers to adapt and implement gender inclusive teaching strategies is lack of training and information and gender friendly learning environments. Indeed, it is the teachers' ability to recognize and understand local, social and gender dynamics by giving voice to "boys" and "girl" experiences.

Recommendations

The recommendations emerging from this paper are intended to inform both teachers and government on enhancing gender equality education as follows:

- Teachers in rural zones should be empowered and supported especially women;
- Government should develop specific measurable targets and strategies to train, recruit and retain qualified male and female teachers;
- There should be a set clear vision with measurable objectives and indicators for women's representation in education management positions. Ministries of education should ensure that severe sanctions for teachers and head teachers responsible for gender based violence are brought to book.
- There should be encouragement of women in leadership positions in school management committee.
- Reinforce continuing teacher training and professional development programmes by integrating themes on gender and gender equality.
- Implement school based capacity building activities in the school curriculum whereby students and teachers particularly girls and women will resolve social/ academic challenges.
- Learning environment should be comfortable for male and female learners to avoid gender disparity .

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