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Topic: Nature of School Environment: From a Gender Perspective

Keywords: Blended Learning, gender, school, mixed method research, environment

Findings

The current study seeks to identify gender-related school prejudice and practices. Thus, “Mixed Methods Research Design” was adopted for this study. This method blends qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Biographical questionnaire was used to learn about student genders. The total sample for administering this tool was 168 students, of which 105 were male and 63 were female. The sample included 53 seventh-graders, 58 eighth graders, and 57 ninth graders.

Students' answers on the topics above suggest they criticized family, school, and societal gender prejudices. School was important but crucial to their life. For the reasons mentioned above, they loved school. Due to their emotional link or subject area competence, students preferred female teacher over male teachers without hesitation. The pupils' comments showed problematic gender relations caused by high gender segregation and enablers like same sex sitting. Students complained about gender bias in Math's, Biology, and English owing to facilitators' unwillingness to use gender-neutral pedagogy or classroom management and gender stereotyping. As described previously, student replies matched researcher unstructured observations of non-gender-sensitive classroom operations.

Interviews were done with 24 instructors i.e., with 8 teachers each teaching in classes seventh, eighth and ninth. The disciplines taught by these professors were English, Hindi, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Sports.

Summary of teacher responses to the questions asked in interview:

S. No.	Theme	Views/Responses
1.	Non-Gender Sensitive	Views regarding characteristics of an ideal school
2.	Gender neutral	Views of teachers regarding reasons for choosing teaching as profession
3.	Gender Biased	Views of teachers whether gender impacts the choice of an individual's profession
4.	Non-Gender Sensitive	Teacher's understanding of the terms “sex”

		and “gender”
5.	Gender Biased	Responses on whether they divided their students according to the sex during classroom processes
6.	Gender Stereotypical	Opinion regarding performing better leadership role when working in groups
7.	Gender Stereotypical	Responses of Teachers regarding subjects appropriate for male students as well as female students
8.	Gender Stereotypical	Views regarding Gender related issues faced during classroom interactions

Common Trends in Class Observations of VII, VIII & IX Standards

Gender segregation was evident in seating and classroom learning. The facilitators promoted a ‘gendered idea of otherness’ among pupils. Orthodox values and beliefs connected to dating stigma among students developed the standards of sample school. The research school promoted gender stereotyping in different gender-focused classroom environments. The whole classroom procedure, regardless of grade, minimized male-female mingling. Segregated sitting was mandatory in all classrooms. In junior courses, kids had greater space to mingle. The isolation increased when students reached puberty. Semi-structured interviews with instructors revealed that many felt their position was more like moral police monitoring kids than teaching constructively. The researcher saw instructors discourage gender-neutral classroom environments multiple times.

Effectiveness of blended teaching-learning process through gender lens:

Recent pandemic necessitated new conditions and efforts to provide outstanding education when conventional methods are not available. The NEP 2020 emphasizes use of technology while recognizing its dangers. It requires well planned and adequately sized pilot studies to establish maximize advantages of online/digital education while minimizing the drawbacks. Therefore, the aim of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of blended learning in online education during the pandemic. It is noteworthy to acknowledge that all the online lessons conducted by teachers at the school were facilitated using the Google Meet platform.