

Equality or equity: Gender awareness issues in secondary schools in Pakistan

Halai A.

Institute for Educational Development, Aga Khan University, PO Box 13688, Karachi 75950, Pakistan

Abstract: This paper focuses on gender awareness issues as a dimension of addressing the wider issue of the quality of education in Pakistan from the perspective of social justice. In Pakistan classrooms, boys and girls learn separately and therefore teachers and others tend to think that there are no gender issues once access is achieved and the learners are in the classroom. However, beyond access there are several factors that compromise quality of education and raise issues for gender equity as an element of social justice. These issues are examined in the context of a professional development intervention on promoting gender awareness among secondary mathematics teachers in disadvantaged schools in rural Pakistan. Drawing upon the seminal work of the paper posits that teacher professional development for gender awareness and more broadly should raise teachers' consciousness and enable them to develop their capabilities to function in ways that are valued by them and are not necessarily adaptive to dominant social forces. The paper raises significant issues for policy and practice in school education and teacher education. © 2010.

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Authors with affiliations:

1. Halai, A., Institute for Educational Development, Aga Khan University, PO Box 13688, Karachi 75950, Pakistan