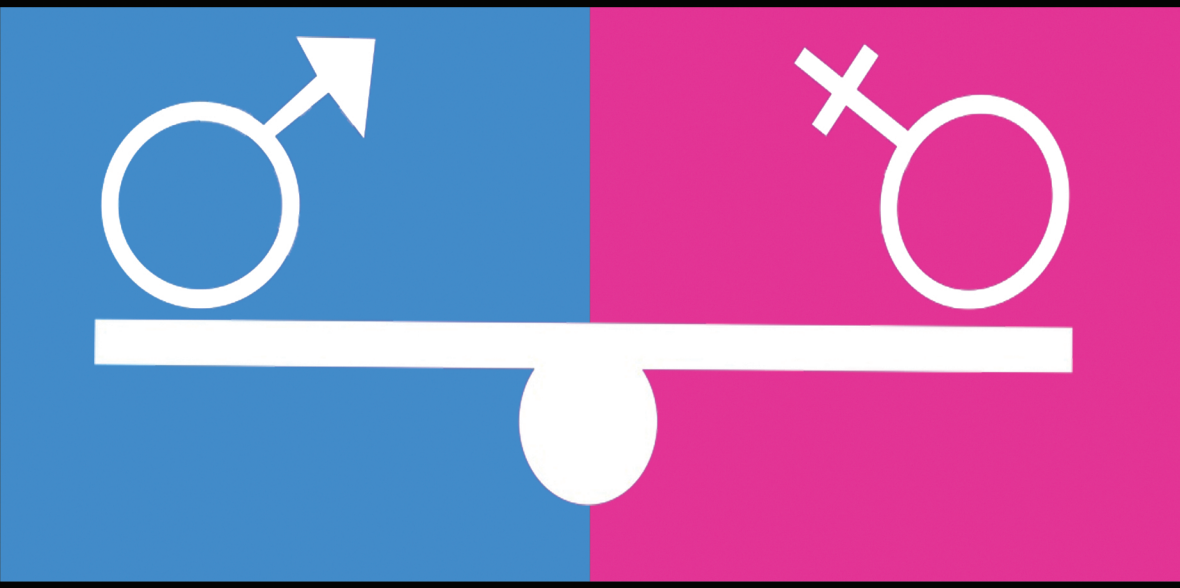
A VOLUME IN INTERNATIONAL ADVANCES IN EDUCATION:
GLOBAL INITIATIVES FOR EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE



GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN EDUCATION

Raising Awareness, Fostering Equity, Advancing Justice

Edited by
Elinor L. Brown and Guichun Zong

Global Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality in Education

Raising Awareness, Fostering Equity, Advancing Justice

A Volume in
International Advances in Education:
Global Initiatives for Equity and Social Justice

Series Editors:
Elinor Brown*, University of Kentucky*
Rhonda Craven, *University of Western Sydney*
George F. McLean, *Catholic University of America*

International Advances in Education: Global Initiatives for Equity and Social Justice

Elinor Brown, Rhonda Craven, and George F. McLean, Series Editors

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Raising Awareness, Fostering Equity, Advancing Justice

Edited by

Elinor L. Brown
University of Kentucky

and

Guichun Zong
Kennesaw State University

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SERIES INTRODUCTION

Elinor L. Brown, Rhonda C. Craven, and George McLean

International Advances in Education: Global Initiatives for Equity and Social Justice is an international research monograph series of scholarly works that focuses primarily on empowering children, adolescents, and young adults from diverse educational, sociocultural, linguistic, religious, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic settings to become nonexploited/nonexploitive contributing members of the global community.

The series, edited by Professors Elinor L. Brown (College of Education, University of Kentucky) and Rhonda G. Craven (Institute for Positive Psychology and Education, Australian Catholic University), draws on the international community of distinguished scholars to serve as guest editors for each volume, and prominent researchers, academics, and community organizers to contribute to the evidence base for developing sound educational policies, practices, and innovative programs to optimize the potential of all students. Each themed volume includes multidisciplinary theory, research, and practice that provides an enriched understanding of the drivers of human potential via education to assist readers in exploring, adapting, and replicating innovative strategies that enable ALL students to realize their full potential.

Volumes include: 1. *Religion and Spirituality*, 2. *Ethnicity and Race: Creating Educational Opportunities Around the Globe*, 3. *Refugee and Immigrant Students: Achieving Equity in Education*, 4. *Communication and Language: Surmounting the Barriers to Cross-Cultural Understanding*, 5. *Indigenous peoples: Education and Equity*, 6. *Migrants and Refugees: Equitable Education for Displaced Populations*, 7. *Poverty, Class, and Schooling: Global Perspectives on*

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Economic Justice and Educational Equity, 8. *Inclusive Education for Students With Intellectual Disabilities*, 9. *Comparative International Perspectives on Education and Social Change in Developing Countries and Indigenous Peoples in Developed Countries*, 10. *E-Learning and Social Media: Education and Citizenship for the Digital 21st Century*, 11. *Global Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality in Education: Raising Awareness, Fostering Equity, Advancing Justice*, and 12. *Inclusive Physical Activities: International Perspectives*.

Volume 11, *Global Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality in Education: Raising Awareness, Fostering Equity, Advancing Justice* presents an outstanding international array of research-based evidence on the advantages of educating girls, and the importance of infusing, into school curriculums, the significant contributions made by women to the development of contemporary societies. Additionally, the volume opens the discussion on fostering gender and sexual orientation equity and reducing bias at all levels of the education spectrum. The international team of authors collectively raise awareness of the advantages of fostering gender inclusiveness, and provide many tools and strategies to implement programs that promote gender equity, support sexual orientation diversity, advance social justice, and reduce bullying and bias in schools and societies around the world.

VOLUME INTRODUCTION

Elinor L. Brown and Guichun Zong

In 1990, prevalent concerns over inadequate educational opportunity for women and girls prompted an international dialog at The World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs. In Article 3—Universalizing Access and Promoting Equity," Number 3 states that "The most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation. All gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated" (UNESCO, 1990). Two and a half decades later, while acknowledging the progress made in advancing women's rights and empowerment in recent years, scholars and policymakers have argued that the broad trends in world gender equity indicate that the progress has experienced setbacks in some countries and been uneven in many parts of the world.

As demonstrated by the 2015 *Global Gender Gap Report*, published by the World Economic Forum which looked globally at education, economic empowerment, health, and political empowerment, much work still needs to be done to provide universal access to quality education for all girls and to ensure more representation of women in political arenas and leadership roles, as well as equal opportunities in the economic sphere. The push for greater gender equity has gained new urgency as indicated during the United Nations Summit on sustainable development in September 2015 and the 2016 Davos World Economic Forum where gender inequality was a key topic of discussion. Both politicians and business executives recognize that addressing gender equity will have multiple

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effects on achieving goals for sustainable development and agree that addressing gender inequality requires not only the establishment of international legal instruments and implementing changes in national policies, but more importantly the strengthening of capacity and empowerment at the local level.

Although the world community is making progress in raising awareness of gender parity in education, health, economic, and political empowerment, globally, women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence. Women have fewer opportunities for economic participation than men, less access to basic and higher education, greater health and safety risks, and less political representation. Additionally, gender-based violence, such as human trafficking for cheap labor and sexual exploitation is rising at an alarming rate fueled in part by globalization.

Volume 11, *Global Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality in Education: Raising Awareness, Fostering Equity, Advancing Justice*, explores the political and cultural consequences of gender and sexuality bias faced by many. The chapters in this collection highlight local initiatives and strategies to address gender inequality by presenting "on the ground" rich descriptions and analysis that go beyond government policy slogans and stipulations. It shares many innovative, practical, and achievable projects and programs focused on reducing gender and sexual orientation discrimination and the economic and social hardships that have been institutionalized through social/cultural barriers, pedagogical exclusion, and inadequate educational opportunity.

This volume consists of three sections; each centered on an aspect of gender equity in the context of education. The chapters are drawn from a wide range of countries including: Australia, China, Gambia, Grenada, Jamaica, India, Italy, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Slovenia, Swaziland, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, and Turkey in addressing issues of gender equity, citizenship education, egalitarianism in sexual orientation, and strategies to combat human trafficking. The 15 chapters document both the progress and challenges facing those who strive for gender equity in access to education, the portrayal of women in curricula, and the acceptance of diverse sexual orientations within differing country contexts and provide an overview of promising policies, practices, and replicable successful programs.

Part I, *Promoting Gender Equity in Access to Schooling*, contains five chapters that focus on providing access to educational opportunities for women and girls. Leena Her opens this section with a study of inequitable educational experiences of rural Hmong women born into a patriarchal society. The author argues that the Vietnamese governmental framing of gender education inequities as minority, cultural, and community deficits does not absolve them from addressing and resolving issues that contrib-

ute to these inequities. In Chapter 2, Anne Kanga, Salome Maina, and Lawrence Njoroge employ a mixed-methods study to evaluate the effectiveness of select gender programs in Kenya, a country with the lowest educational attainment index in Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASALs). The study indicates issues needing immediate attention include: the emerging vulnerabilities facing boys, reducing gender inequities between teachers and learners, and raising gender sensitivity among stakeholders. Chapter 3 by Guang Yu Tan, explores the influence of cultural values and community norms on the education of girls in the People's Republic of China. This chapter discusses the conflicts between the traditional roles of women and current educational expectations, challenges, and opportunities available to males and females in rural China.

Authors of Chapter 4, Carly Manion and Haddy Njie, present a case study of the remarkable advancements in gender equity in both education policy and practice in Gambia, West Africa. Results of this case study illustrate the effectiveness of employing a multidimensional approach when seeking to address social justice issues. Chapter 5 by Geeta Verma and Vanshri Nargund-Joshi examine national reform efforts of the Indian Government to provide free and compulsory education for all Indian children and to share the implications of these policies for school-aged girls. The authors identify both the challenges and opportunities of implementing these reforms within the complexities of race, religion, language, customs, and tradition.

Part II, *Reducing Gender Bias in K–12 Curricula*, consists of five chapters that move the volume from education opportunity for women and girls to gender equity in the depiction of history. In Chapter 6, Marva McClean asserts that Caribbean folklore deserves a more in-depth investigation when exploring the history of slavery, postslavery, and postcolonial societies. The author shares innovative approaches in implementing culturally relevant authentic history curricula to assist policy makers, curriculum developers, and classroom teachers in developing transformative practices across the globe. Guichun Zong, author of Chapter 7, investigated the representation of women and girls in contemporary Chinese middle school history textbooks. The author's analysis found that women's roles, achievements, and contributions to the history of China were acknowledged, and graphically described in both text and reference. The findings also revealed that the new textbooks contained many depictions of Chinese ethnic minority women and girls. Chapter 8, by Rakhat Zholdoshalieva and Olga Mun, examined critical theories of truth in the construction of knowledge and the shaping of "official" knowledge in Soviet ideology. The authors, in their analysis of textbook content, language, and visual representations, found that the contemporary nationalist ideologies promote gendered ethnicity, shape certain perspectives of

identity, and often contradict what students observe in their daily experiences.

Ginney Norton, author of Chapter 9, contends that the design and content standards of American social studies textbooks, current curriculums, and instructional practices still center on an isolated and biased construction of American history. In this chapter the author, using the power of narratives and historical significance to provide a pluralistic and humanistic approach to teaching history and shares instructional strategies that promote civic practice in a participatory democracy, reduces persistent inequities related to gender representation in history, and foster students' sense of citizenship. Part II concludes with Chapter 10 by Bulent Tarman and Ahmet Doganay, on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and focuses on the changing definition of citizenship based on the social, cultural, and political changes brought about by immigration, migration, and refugee status in Turkey. The authors posit that this new concept of citizenship "global democratic citizenship" requires active citizen participation with equal rights and responsibilities and asserts that both school and society play an important role in appropriate gendered behavior. This chapter also shares a citizenship curriculum, developed in Turkey with the support of the European Union.

The five chapters in Part III, *Teaching, Learning, Living in Gender/Sexually Inclusive Environments,* begins with Chapter 11, in which the author, Xiaoli Jiang, elaborates the cultural changes that have impacted women in China post 1949, and the culture that deprived them of their educational and social justice rights. Additionally, the author examines the contemporary challenges facing Chinese women in access to education, economic security, and social justice in the new Chinese capitalist economy of the 21st century. Chapter 12, by Kayi Ntinda, focuses on the construction of gendered education among *Abantu* (people) communities of Southern Africa. The chapter examines gendered perspectives in social and education roles including their interchangeability between males and females, expounds on the important role of schools as powerful agents of socialization, and examines the evidence on school enrollment and retention by gender through illustrative examples from countries such as Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia, and Zambia.

The authors of Chapter 13, Mojca Pajnik and Veronika Bajt, discusses women and girls caught in the web of human trafficking from a perspective that has not received significant attention in the field of education and educational research. The chapter focuses on the increasing pervasiveness of cyber trafficking and underage trafficking in online/web environments centering on the matrimonial web in Slovenia, and shares methods to identify discussion opportunities and develop educational strategies to expose the consequence of falling victim to human traffickers

and their online manifestations. Chapter 14, by Tinashe M. Dune, Elias Mpofu, David Evans, and Gerard Sullivan, provides a brief history of the sociocultural construction of sexual identity and examines the role of school environments in advocating for the acceptance and nonjudgmental integration of sexual pluralism. The authors posit that multicultural education is an ideal environment to promote social inclusion, advance egalitarian attitudes, and embrace sexual pluralism.

The volume concludes with Chapter 15 by Jacqueline Ullman, Gerard Sullivan, and Heidi Gilchrist. This chapter continues the discussion on school environments by examining the impact of school climate, teacher biases, and prevailing community attitudes concerning minority students, in relation to gender, ethnicity, and particularly sexual orientation in the Australian context. The chapter includes with innovative programs that can be implemented to overcome the negative effects of peer social pressures and prejudices allowing educators and school staffs to better accommodate the individual needs of students and positive learning environments.

The volume puts forth a cogent exchange of unique ideas and strategies that will encourage agents of change around the world to consider a wide variety of approaches to insure equitable education opportunity across for all. The individual chapters captured in this volume provide examples of theory, research, and practice that collectively present an informative, cross-perspective, international conversation highlighting the gender and sexual orientation issues that abound in a wide variety of educational contexts around the world while spotlighting important, inspirational, and innovative remedies. Taken together, the chapters advance our understanding of best practices in gender equity education while collectively rejecting institutional policies and traditional practices that reinforce the roots of gender marginalization and sexual identity discrimination. Chapter authors utilized a range of methodologies including empirical research, historical reviews, case studies, and personal reflections to demonstrate that education is an absolute human right and a powerful mechanism to promote individual, national, and international upward social and economic mobility, national stability, and citizen well-being. Though each chapter is place-specific, the volume editors were committed to ensuring that the primary ideas, frameworks, and strategies related to gender and human sexuality equity were relevant to a broad international audience.

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