Towards Gender Equitable Schooling: Insights from Rural Teachers' Voice in the Local Context

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ABSTRACT This paper foregrounds local teachers' views to understand how we could address gender inequalities in schools. It asks: How do teachers' constructions of gender shape gendered social relations? What are the implications of these on gender equitable schooling? The paper draws from semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers in three South African primary schools. The findings denote how essentialist teachers' constructions, which polarised children into masculine and feminine beings, had the likelihood to compromise the quality of children's schooling experience. The existing dominant (and cultural) discourses of gender were found to inform how teachers socialised girls and boys into inequitable gender relations. This affected the expectations that teachers place on children's behaviour, choice and performance. The study recommends the need to embrace the multiplicity and fluidity of gender qualities, and to support girls and boys to develop to their best human potential, regardless of their gender.

INTRODUCTION

Enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996 are the values of democracy, social justice and human dignity (Government Gazette 2003). In tandem with this, the South African government has formulated and adopted numerous policies with the aim to address the social inequalities in the education system, which were mainly orchestrated during the apartheid era. Chief among these, have been gender inequalities in the schooling system. In response, the South African Government committed itself to gender equality; as a result a Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) was appointed by the Department of Education to redress issues relating to gender inequalities in education (Wolpe 2013). The White Paper 6 (Department of Education 2001) on inclusive education also stresses the need to transform the schooling system in order to provide equitable and inclusive opportunities for all, including girls and boys. It asserts the need for action strategies to ensure that the schooling system is equitably responsive to and affirmative of girls and boys from all backgrounds, in a bid to strive for transforming schools into arenas where every child is supported to develop to their best human potential. A plethora of polices have also been implemented in tandem with the principles of inclusively equitable advancement of the quality of teaching and learning and schooling experiences for girls and boys. For example, Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), National Curriculum Statements (NCS), Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) and recently the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS).

Yet studies (Bennett 2009; Reddy 2010; Bhana and Pattman 2011) indicate that gender inequalities are rife in South African schools, and their concomitant adverse effects such as gender-based violence continue to inequitably compromise schooling experiences of girls and boys. The dominant gender constructions and expectations in South African schools continue to give ascendancy to hegemonic masculinities over femininities (and other forms of masculinities) in ways that do not uphold the principles of inclusive education and equitable gender relations. In this context where there is a clear discrepancy between the official policy and the lived schooling experiences, two inevitable questions that must be answered then are: what role do teachers play in shaping gender relations in the schools? What can be learnt from this in order to support teachers in their roles to equitably and inclusively support girls and boys necessary to achieve their best human potential?

This study attempts to address these questions by exploring teachers' constructions of gender within the context of three rural schools in South Africa. Drawing on the feminist inter-

pretations of the sociological theory of social constructionism (Burr et al. 2012; Gergen 2013; McLeod 2013), and critical men's studies (Kimmel 2010; Morojele 2011; Connell 2012a; Morrell et al. 2012), it highlights the central role that teachers and schools play in shaping inequitable gender relations, given the centrality of teachers' roles to the initiatives of inclusiveness and gender equality in the schools. It begins with the discussion of the theoretical positioning of the study, research methodology, and proceeds to an exploration of the study findings.

Theoretical Positioning

The study is guided by feminist interpretations of a sociological theory of social constructionism (Burr et al. 2012; Gergen 2012, 2013; Bourdieu 2013) as its theoretical framework for understanding the role that teachers' constructions of gender play in shaping gender relations in the schools. At the heart of social constructionism is the notion that teachers' understandings of gender draw on the dominant gender discourses in any given context. This frame of view construes gender discourses as a vehicle through which inequitable gender relations are infused. It maintains that the power of gender discourses in society, which prescribe gender roles and performances, ensures the normalising of the polarised discourses of masculinities and femininities. Based on these discourses, girls and boys are socialised and pressured to perform gender in conformity to what is contrived to be a normal status of affairs. This legitimises the inequitable gender relations to appear as if they are a normal part of life. In explaining the power of dominant (gender) discourses in informing our daily perceptions of the world, a French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (also see 2013) used the metaphor of water and fish as illustrated below:

Social reality exists, so to speak, twice, in things and minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside agents. And when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself 'as a fish in water', it does not feel the weight of the water and takes the world about itself for granted (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 127).

This metaphor reflects how humans are convolutedly embedded in their social world. By extension, this denotes how teachers are intricately entangled in the gender discourses and practices within their environments (including the schools) to a point where they might become uncritical of the prevalent inequitable gender relations. As Cole (2013) has succinctly summarised, teachers' understanding of gender become dependent upon the available repertoire of gender values and discourses in the schools and society just as surely as babies come bathed in the concepts their community holds about babies as they come bathed in amniotic fluid. With teachers being so entangled in the historically constituted gendered social relations in their specific contexts, the findings of this study illustrate how teachers' critical awareness of gender inequalities in the schools was diminished or at least compromised. This resulted in teachers unwittingly or otherwise socialising boys and girls into unequal gendered expectations and performances which reinforced the existing gender inequalities.

Bourdieu's ideas and their feminist interpretations, for instance, by Lois McNay et al. (2012), also facilitate an understanding of how teachers' gendered constructions and expectations can become incorporated within children's beliefs and practices – or habitus. In this view, boys and girls are viewed as active social agents who exercise agency in the processes of gendering (Renold and Ringrose 2012). Gender is seen as a social construct; some form of performances (Butler 2011a), which are historically and culturally rooted in contextual systems of social relationships (Burr et al. 2012). This conceptualisation draws on the ideas of developmental psychology, which, influenced by the work of Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner, has shifted in recent years from a view of the child as an active, but isolated agent to an emphasis on the child as an active social being, accepting that making sense of gender is a social process; it is an activity situated within a cultural and historical context:

We have come to appreciate that through such social life, the child acquires a framework for interpreting experience, and learns how to negotiate in a manner congruent with requirements of culture. Making sense (of gender) is a social process; it is an activity situated within (a) cultural and historical context (Bruner and Haste 2010).

This means that the dominant gender discourses in the schools and society become a frame of reference that mediate girls' and boys' understanding and interpretations of their gen-

der experiences. Girls and boys learn how to contrive their aptitudes, fantasies and abilities in congruence with the socially inscribed dominant prescriptions of gender expectations. However, the view that children are intricately entangled in the social relations within their communities (Burr et al. 2012; Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013) might serve to undermine children's role in challenging gender relations. Indeed, the vast body of literature awards children little control or power, and children are normally conceptualised as passive victims of the processes of gender socialisation (Renold and Ringrose 2012). In South African schools the systems of beliefs and social relationships do not affirm gender equality (Bhana and Pattman 2010; Nkozi 2009; Sanger 2010) despite the constitutional and policy intentions which support gender equality in schooling and all structures of society.

In light of the above, it can be safely argued that the view that children's constructions of gender are tied to these factors might paint a bleak picture, hence the need to understand how children actively construct, contest and perform gender in real life schooling situations. Pierre Bourdieu offers a more 'generative' paradigm, which takes into account not just the way disciplinary effects of gender are deposited into the children's frame of understanding, but how the living through or 'praxis' of these embodied norms offers some space for agency (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013). However, within the context of this study, where gender inequality was so deeply entrenched in teachers' constructions and expectations, girls and boys had limited possibilities for agency and choices to perform alternative femininities and masculinities without being ostracised and devalued as social misfits. This is mainly due to teachers' constructions of masculinities and femininities as innately tied to being a boy and a girl (respectively), and research (for instance, Morojele 2011; Bhana and Pattman 2010) has found that this way of gendering is deeply implicated in the perpetuation of gender inequality in schools.

The general tendency in society is to construct femininity and masculinity as unitary and static gender qualities which are predetermined by children's genitalia. This is antithetical to critical men's studies (see Kimmel 2010; Connell 2012a; Morrell et al. 2012 for example), which criticise the determinist constructions of gen-der. At the heart of critical men's studies is the impetus to promote constructions of femininities and masculinities as plural and fluid human qualities (Kimmel 2010). The argument is that gender inequalities in schools could be traced to the polarisation of feminine and masculine attributes as static and unitary gender attributes (Morrell et al. 2012). In other words, boys and girls could be affirmed and supported to develop to their best human potential, in safe and equitable schooling environments, if teachers affirm fluidity and plurality in how children perform gender. This would allow boys and girls to perform masculinities and femininities in dynamic, alternative and non-conforming ways which transcend the constraining and polarising prescriptions of the current dominant discourses of gender.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed qualitative methodologies (Mouton 2004; Cohen et al. 2011) to provide data on how teachers' constructions of gender play role in shaping gendered social relations, and the implications of these on in/equitable gender relations in the schools. The participants in the study were 12 teachers (7 females and 5 males aged between 27 and 65 years) from three rural primary schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Five of them had a teaching diploma, 4 had a diploma with Advanced Certificate in Education and 3 had Bachelor's degrees in Education. Conducted over a period of three weeks (five days on each schooling site), semi-structured interviews were used as the method of data collection. The semi-structured interviews took the form of individual discussions with teachers during the break, lunch and leisure time. The semi-structured interviews involved the use of a tape recorder to document the participants' response for ease of reference later during data analysis. The use of a tape recorder allowed for verbatim citation of teachers' views during the reporting and thus privileged teachers' voice in the discussion of the findings. This approach enabled the study to reveal how teachers constructed gender, with the opportunity to make reference to some episodic cases of gender interactions in real life schooling situations (Mouton 2004).

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from the Department of Education, the school management and the participants in the study. The participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary, and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Ethical clearance was obtained to conduct this study through the University Research Office, University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal. Pseudonyms have been used to represent both the schools and teachers involved throughout this paper.

Data Analysis

Firstly, the data were analysed through an inductive process whereby research findings were allowed to emerge from frequent, dominant and significant events in the raw data (Nieuwenhuis 2007; Cohen et al. 2011). Thereafter analysis involved identifying broad categories of constructs across the data related to teachers' constructions of gender and their implications of gender equitable social relations in the schools. This necessitated a line by line reading of the different data sets and identification of salient (representative) quotes that would be used as illustrations during the discussion of the study findings. The second phase of data analysis involved identifying theoretically and conceptually informed themes across these categories (Cresswell 2013). This allowed for explicit themes to emerge, which included schools as gendering spaces, drawing of teachers' constructions of gender differences, and the implications of teachers' gendering expectations on girls' and boys' schooling experiences, and for gender equitable relations in the schools.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Schools' Role in Shaping Gender Behaviour

Current studies have recognized primary schooling as an arena for the construction of gender meanings and positioning (Anderson 2013; Bhana 2013; Morojele 2013a). The centrality of teachers' constructions of gender in positioning and shaping gender relations cannot be over-emphasised (Morojele 2012). In South Africa, Bhana and Pattman (2010) and Unterhalter (2013) have demonstrated how schools simulta-

neously reproduce the unjust gendered social order and generate change. A study by Bhana (2013) has, however, also found teachers' discourses such as children are children: gender doesn't matter. This implied that teachers constructed primary schooling as a gender-free zone. On the contrary, Morojele (2013b) asserted the crucial role that schooling plays in shaping gender relations and posited that teachers' constructions of primary schooling as a gender-free zone is a means to normalise the existing gender inequalities in the schools. This is only meant to underplay teachers' role in reinforcing unequal gender relations.

Teachers in this study recognised gender in terms of different attributes that they accorded to boys and girls. They attributed gender differences to both nurture and nature, thus alluding to the dialectic effects of culture and the socialisation processes (Harro 2000), and anatomical dimensions of gender differences in shaping gender attributes and performances (Butler 2011b). Interestingly, almost all teachers' examples foregrounded the role of nurture in shaping gender attributes; thereby implicitly relegating the role of nature in shaping gender values. The teachers' perspectives were found to be in tandem with critical sociologists (Weedon 2008; Connell 2012b) who have advanced persuasive arguments against biological determinism (which propagates nature) as a basis for constructing gender differences. Instead, teachers reflected on the ways in which learners are raised and groomed into these roles, through socialisation as illustrated below:

Here esikoleni (school) we raise izigane (children) like they are our own, even our culture as Zulu people teaches us your child is mine. Siyabafundisa (we teach them) to be good people, to respect people and how to behave as young women and men (Mrs Mkhize).

Another teacher stated that:

Isiko (Zulu culture and tradition) is what tells children how to be. Bakhula ngalo(they grow with it). Males teach boys how to be and that's how it is, and women teach girls how to be. These boys growing without father turn out like street tramps. Girls grow up with mothers who drink turn out to loose and sleep around. Children need to be taught (Mrs Masondo).

The data indicate that how to behave as a young girl or boy is a clear depiction of gendered socialization in the school and communi-

ty. Ironically, as in the case of Bhana (2013) teachers often gave little recognition of the schooling processes (including teaching and learning) as active dimensions of gender socialization processes. Most of the teachers believed that the learners are socialised into gender traits from their homes and they believed that teachers were inactive in the continuation and reinforcement of gender qualities. Foucault has revealed hegemonic (Connell 2012b) gender knowledge and power as a scheme that operates below the radar, since its procedures usually seem normal (thus trivial) and not worth protesting (Schwan and Shapiro 2011). This could be a tacit way in which teachers divert attention of addressing gender inequalities in the schools away from them by trivialising teachers' active role in shaping gender relations. The study argues that this had the likelihood to ensure that the scheme of gender inequalities in the schools operates below the radar in order to minimise possible resistance against it.

Another important issue raised in the data is the role of traditions and culture in shaping gender relations. Teachers claimed that girls and boys are raised differently in the isiZulu culture and traditions:

Just go outside into the playground, the boys are dirty, loud, and wild and the girls are clean, pretty and respectful.…I think the reason is God created boys and girls different, their hormones are different and they are taught through culture that a girl must always be clean and must respect (Mrs Mabaso).

Therefore, the schools have become a microcosm of the broader society – it is a stage on which the cultural gender expectations and discourses are reinforced and acted upon, or performed (Butler 2011b). Contrary to the conventional notions of schools as arenas that infuse modern values of Western civilisation, the findings point to the pervasiveness of traditional cultural discourses in shaping gender relations. Teachers drew on dominant discourses of isiZulu culture to conserve the existing status quo of gender inequalities by nostalgically (Moletsane 2011) verging on the rhetoric of tradition and cultural preservation.

The historically constituted cultural discourses (Gergen 2012) of gender within isiZulu culture were used to determine girls' and boys' abilities and aptitudes. These were a means of control to induce conformity to dominant values of masculinities and femininities, which are normally constructed to be innately tied to boys and girls respectively (Morojele 2012). This evokes Foucault's notion of the 'docile body' which depicts the social regimes that make human bodies submissive and controllable (docility), and of the ways in which this is contrived to effect the prospects of (gender usefulness or efficiency) (utility) which, in turn results in gender (discipline) (Schwan and Shapiro 2011). The illustration that, "*the boys are dirty, loud, and wild, and the girls are clean, pretty and respectful"* does not literally refer to the activities of boys and girls, but instead this is a regulatory fantasy prescribing the cultural expectations of what it means to be a boy or girl in the context of these schools.

Effects of Gender Expectations on Girls' and Boys' Experiences

In trying to protect the dominant discourses of gender, teachers did not see anything wrong in pressuring girls and boys to conform to culturally ascribed gender roles. Instead, they perceived this as an effective tool for protecting learners from adopting what they regarded as socially undesirable attributes such as children becoming hobos (for boys) or prostitutes (for girls). This was premised on a strong belief that boys and girls ought to be different, and as indicated, in order to conform to the rules of culture and those of God as these were perceived to be the primary laws governing gender and social relations. Teachers commented on what could be understood as the implications of the dominant gendering expectations on girls' and boys' experiences of schooling. They spoke as follows about girls:

They[girls] don't like to do Science and Technology duties in class activities like setting up classroom and using equipment. Boys are in charge of all experiments. Girls just clean-up the area after working.

Girls are not afraid to ask questions and request teacher assistance.

Girls don't do drawing, they ask boys to draw for them in art and technological drawing, they do not have the skill.

Girls are good at reflective and emotional thinking.

On the other hand, boys were spoken of thus:

Not able to perform well in learning areas such as Language and life Orientation because

they do not want to reflect and do emotional thinking and analyses.

It is more difficult for boys to concentrate in class; they often test boundaries and break rules for popularity.

Boys never ask for help from teachers.

Boys do all the things that need hard work. They have more confidence.

The coercive power of these constructions typically propagated and reinforced by hegemonic discourse (Connell 2012a) precast the spaces and places that boys and girls occupy across a spectrum of fields (McLeod 2013).They create what Bourdieu (2013) calls a habitus – the living through of these gendered perceptual expectations, and boys and girls act out these through the embodied accretion and effects of gendered dispositions. As illustrated above, girls and boys express their gendered habitus through durable ways of being, doing (performing gender (Butler 2011b), standing, speaking, walking, which included making gender choices that conform to the dominant expectations of what it meant to be a girl or a boy (Reay 2013). This shows that gendered habitus is not simply a mental schema – a perceptual construction of what teachers expect from girls and boys. These constructions also inform the bodily way (for girls and boys) of being in the world, whose experience goes beyond teachers' discursive constructions of gender to concrete actions and performances that girls and boys displayed in these contexts.

The power inequalities accorded to the above gendered expectations had the potential to limit girls' acquisition of skills that entailed leadership and responsibilities over others around them. The boys' expectations were linked to the masculine traits mentioned in the differences, and these allowed them (boys) to have a wider range of knowledge acquisition in learning subjects. For instance, the common discourses of gender that were found in these schools also included descriptions of boys as violent, rough, tough, strong, loud, naughty, wild and disobedient, untidy, dirty, protective, aggressive and less emotional. The social status ascribed to these traits, knowledge and skills meant that boys were more likely to achieve favourably than girls who were expected to take on menial and subservient character traits. Further, at these schools boys had the opportunity through gardening to learn practical skills as well as theoret-

ical knowledge of natural science, mathematics and technology. Within the context of capitalism that dominantly governs the current South African society, the knowledge and skills (by the subjects and activities they were expected to do at school) that boys were expected and socialised to master, were more in tandem with the present job market requirements. There is a possibility that education in these schools inequitably predisposed boys to be more successful and employable than girls in the capitalist labour market, thereby perpetuating the gendered economic inequalities between men and women as it is currently the case in the South African society today. More scientific research is required to probe further into this matter.

The role that teachers ascribed to boys as protectors of both the school property and their sisters (or other girls) clearly exemplifies the unequal gendered power relationships that teachers' gendered expectations forged between boys and girls. In part, these preferentially provided boys with the opportunity to learn taking responsibility, emphasising their (boys') roles to control and protect assets and resources, at the expense of relegating girls to subservience, lack of control and constantly in need of boys protection. This expectation of boys to protect girls had the likelihood to propagate a feeling of entitlement for boys to take unfair advantage of girls, which might include unwelcomed and unsolicited sexual advances and so forth. As Morojele (2013b) noted, the dominant constructions of gender predispose girls to forms of gender-based violence such as sexual assaults, sexual harassment and rape. The sense of powerlessness that these constructions are likely to imbue among girls might render girls more reticent to challenge, refuse or even report cases of gender-based violence, as also observed by Clowes et al. (2009).

On the other hand, teachers' expectation on girls could be viewed as merely an attempt to domesticate girls, in preparing them to assume girls' place as mothers, child nurturers and domestic workers in future. Another dimension is that of sexualisation of girls' bodies and this was expressed in the form of teachers' attentions to how girls took care of their bodies. This indicates how teachers' expectations of girls are invested in heterosexual imaginaries as well as how, as Bhana and Pattman (2011) argued these schools have become places where girls' sexu-

alities are evoked, shaped and regulated. Associating femininities with lack of rationality, and high emotionality is a popular dimension of constructions of femininities (Anderson 2013). In this study, teachers took an extreme version of this construction that girls focus on their personal beauty and wish to portray a heterosexually attractive image at the expense of acquiring academic knowledge, skills and values. In addition, girls were described as peaceful, soft, and weak, quiet, well behaved, docile and respectful of authority, neat, clean, vulnerable, sensitive and very emotional. These were the values that boys and girls respectively were generally socialised to perform, with punitive measures levels against those who try to challenge or transcend these constraining gendered values. As Bourdieu and Wacquant (2013) have also noted, these ensured that children had limited possibilities for agency and choices to perform alternative femininities and masculinities without being ostracised and devalued as social misfits in these schooling contexts.

The consequences of these expectations on girls' and boys' experiences, and possibilities for them to continue their schooling are further illustrated below:

All learners face many challenges that might remove them from school, for boys it is drugs and alcohol and for girls it is teenage pregnancy.

Boys can stay in school longer; they can take drugs with them to school, like they do in most high schools.

Girls often have to leave school because they cannot take babies to school, they have to stay home and raise them.

Girls are often the people who take the role of the parent in most child headed households; furthermore they sometime leave school early in order to provide for the household.

Girls and boys are affected and infected with HIV/AIDS; however girls are vulnerable to ill-health due to their sexual anatomy; and the effects of pregnancy and childbirth of HIV positive girls.

The data further highlights the devastating consequences that gendering expectations had on girls' schooling life experiences. It becomes clear that addressing teachers' expectations and constructions of gender is pivotal in the strategies for gender equitable learning environments. The findings resonate with other studies (Bha-

na 2013; Morojele 2013b; Unterhalter 2013; Bennett 2009) that schools play such a critical role in shaping gender performances (Butler 2013), in ways that reinforce unequal gender relations. The consequences of these have been found to be more unfavourable for girls and thereby continuing unabated the scheme of gender inequalities in the schools. These included constraining the chances for girls to continue to attend school due to the social pressure and responsibilities, for example, falling pregnant, raising fatherless children, contracting HIV and AIDS, and being the overseer and breadwinners of child-headed households. Teachers reported that most girls did not perform as well as boys in schools due to these social pressures, and that those who performed well did so under very constraining circumstances that only girls were faced with due to societal pressure for girls to conform to what was regarded as normal ways of being girls.

The data also indicated how gender expectations had a constraining effect on girls' upward mobility through the social and economic strata, including their chances of obtaining well-paying and high status professions. Girls' limited opportunities to attain success in life are contrary to the purposes of schooling in South Africa, as set out in policy statements. Therefore, this had the likelihood to inequitably relegate girls to be susceptible to disease and illness which would further continue girls' cycle of marginalisation and compromised life experiences as the bleak scheme of gender inequalities in the schools continues unabated. These findings point to the fact that the principles that underpinned schooling in these schools were in defiance of our constitutional and education policies in which equality for all (both girls and boys) is guaranteed as a fundamental human right.

CONCLUSION

The currency of the cultural expectations of gender in the schools had the likelihood to obscure teachers' critical social consciousness, thus relegating them to become the custodians of gender-based social injustices arising from the oppressive hegemonic forms of gendering. The study found a clear differentiation of teachers' constructions of boys and girls, which led to discrepancies in knowledge acquisition, access to learning resources and leisure time. These generally favoured boys at the expense of deni-

grating girls, thus supporting the continuation of the cycle of gender inequalities in the schools. These discrepancies are not only concerning in relation to gender equality and inclusiveness education, but they are to some extent, posing as barriers to learning for both girls and boys, as the equation was that boys and girls could mainly learn what was regarded as socially acceptable knowledge and skills befitting their gender. Besides, the tendency to simplistically collapse feminine and masculine qualities into male and female abilities has been found to not serve justice. Instead, this was found to have the likelihood to constrain girls or boys who may have abilities to perform gender beyond the preconceived gender prescriptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations could help improve gender equality in the schools, and possibly reduce some gender-based social ills found in the South African society:

Action planning initiatives involving the school and outer communities have to be initiated in order to promote transformative learning and resistance against sexism and other forms of gender inequality and exclusionary practices that relegate girls and women to subservience. Workshops should be held to equip teachers with knowledge and skills of how to teach and interact with children in ways that do not promote the essentialist and exclusionary notions of masculinities and femininities.

Gender equality initiatives should emphasise the need for teachers to embrace notions of femininities and masculinities as plural and fluid human qualities (that are not rigidly tied to children's genitalia), as a central message for supporting equitable gender relations in the schools.

Teachers should be sensitised about the life-demeaning, constraining and brutal consequences that the promotion of stereotypical gender discourses may have on children and on equitable gender relations in schools and society.

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