Research Project: Social Spaces for Egalitarian Participation in Education – Focus on Gender

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Overview

• Project purpose
• Theoretical background
• Process and intended outcomes
• Structure, timeline, progress to date, and next steps
• Types of projects
• Conclusion
• Q&A
Project Purpose

• To explore ways to understand and improve gender inclusion in Austrian classrooms within the context of each Pädagogische Hochschule

• To support gender equity in Austrian education
Gender Equity in Education

• Examples of approaches
  • Critical reflection as an attitude in education
  • Women's and Gender Studies and Critical Theory show critical reflection is not enough: which alternatives can be offered?
  • Quality of the discussion of "gender" at different levels

• History
  • Turn of the century: Helene Lange, Adelheid Popp
  • 1980s: Intersectionality debate
  • Currently: Decolonization strategies
Projektidee, Intention

Example 1
hooks, b. (1999).
Happy to Be Nappy.
New York: Jump at the Sun.

„Girlpie hair is soft like cotton, flower petal billowy soft, full of frizz and fuzz“
Projektidee, Intention

Example 2
hooks, b. (2002). 
Be Boy Buzz. 
New York: Jump at the Sun.

„I be boy. 
All bliss boy. 
All fine beat. 
All beau boy. Beautiful.“
Structure

• Each team or individual project identifies & describes their own research topic or problem
• All projects engage with theory experts to discuss details and to specify the framing process
• Projects use a framework from the book that was made available and the basic theory text
• Projects focus on a level where gender inequality occurs
• The results will be shared in a monograph as well as through conferences. The project seeks to implement performative "safe social spaces."
Theorie Experts

• Researchers from the Pädagogische Hochschule Salzburg
• Helped participants develop projects
  • Selecting theoretical frameworks
  • Determining level of analysis
  • Identifying existing literature/situating the study in the body of knowledge
• Intended to save participants time
Theoretical Framework

• Gender awareness and gender inclusion
  • Intersectionality: Gender associated with other difference categories (e.g., Cho et al., MacKinnon)
  • Analysis of power and inequality (e.g., Knapp, Ahmed; at different levels)

• Educational-theoretical positioning (multi-perspectivity, diversity sensitivity)

• Reflectiveness as a requirement for effective educational spaces (e.g., hooks)
  • Critical Theory (e.g., Shor, Burbules)
  • Critical Pedagogy, Teachers as Critical Intellectuals (e.g., Giroux)
  • Deliberative Democracy in which positions are negotiated (e.g., Benhabib)

• Safe spaces
  • From feminist gender theory and research (e.g., Ali)
  • In educational research (e.g., Meyer, Arendt, Levinas)
Levels of Gender Inequality

• **Identity:** Trans, cisgender, queer, heterosexual; class; body performance

• **Interaction:** ♂♀, ♂♂, ♀♀♀; Didactics and media; Planning of educational situations / lessons

• **Institution:** School as a social & educational space; Atmosphere of difference / egalitarianism; social functions of educational institutions

• **Society:** Hierarchy of the sexes

• **Knowledge:** Who decides what knowledge is?
Timeline, Progress, and Next Steps

✓ 5. Mai 2017: Project Kick-off (Salzburg)
✓ Sept 2017: Email updates
✓ Mai 2018: Meeting in Salzburg
• Dec. 20, 2018: Email updates: Drafts due
• Jan. 15, 2019: Peer review Prozess
• March 31, 2019: Final articles due
• Ende Mai/Juni 2019: Conference in Salzburg
• ~ Juli 2019: Project end
Examples of Projects

• 1 Theory chapter for each level

• Identity: 3 research projects
  • The role of future elementary school teacher images

• Interaction: 3 research projects*
  • A workshop as a safe space to raise gender awareness in teacher education students

• Institution: 2 research projects*
  • The influence of the Physics hall on the self-empowerment of students

• Knowledge: 1 research project
  • Art education approaches to designing safe spaces with a focus on gender
Conclusion

• Exciting and useful project – participants are engaged, projects are underway, chapters are coming in
• We’re exploring options for publication, dissemination
• Developing a final chapter: How was “safe space” implemented in this research project and what recommendations do we have for replication?
• We’re looking forward to seeing the project outcomes
Questions or Comments?

Vielen Dank!

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