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### Recommended Citation

Rarieya, J., Wango, N., Oluga, M., Abunga, O. (2024). Accelerating Primary Education Tutors' Acquisition of Gender-Responsive Pedagogies. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 5(4), 47-54.

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# Accelerating Primary Education Tutors' Acquisition of Gender-Responsive Pedagogies

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## ABSTRACT

The paper emphasises the value of gender-sensitive teaching strategies that address the often portrayal of gendered stereotypes in primary schools, including those used in textbooks. Professional development programmes are acknowledged for their crucial role in equipping tutors with the essential knowledge and abilities for successful gender-responsive education. This study explores the crucial role of tutor preparation in enhancing student teachers' conceptions of gender roles. It employed a qualitative approach through focus group discussions, observations, group reflections, and analysis of reflective entries to provide an in-depth understanding of how gender-responsive training affects instructional strategies. The study unveils the need for college tutors to rethink their perspectives and beliefs about the integration of gender in their practices and embrace the importance of gender-responsive pedagogy. Identifying and understanding discriminatory practices against male and female student teachers and learners in primary schools is significant in enabling the tutors to design counter strategies that would make their practices gender-responsive. This includes addressing important topics such as cultural biases, ongoing education, and adaptability to add much to the conversation about fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments. Strategies such as mentoring and coaching, structured reflective practice, collaborative teaching, and learning would accelerate learning outcomes of gender-responsive pedagogy.

Submitted: May 15, 2024

Published: August 06, 2024

 10.24018/ejedu.2024.5.4.849

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**Keywords:** Gender-sensitive, inclusive, pedagogy, tutor preparation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Gender-responsive education is increasingly becoming a necessity in eliminating gender-based inequalities in the educational system while also recognizing the different learning needs of every student. Those who prepare teachers (tutors) act as a bridge between educational principles and students' real-world classroom experiences and play a crucial role in the success of this process.

Given the substantial influence gender roles have on children's social development, it is critical to comprehend gender roles in the early years of education. Their gender roles shape children's self-concept, socialization, and relationship-building. Achieving a proper balance in the gender development of a learner requires a teacher who is conversant with how gender issues may play out in the classroom and their effect on learners. This is important because the teacher needs to understand their critical role in fostering gender inclusion and sensitivity in the classroom and, hence, the need to utilize effective teaching

tactics (Khaneeyor & Su, 2023). Tutors have a significant impact on how student teachers experience education. More specifically, within the gender arena, they serve as intermediaries for the implementation of gender equality and inclusion initiatives in classrooms and educational institutions, leading to the provision of a gender-responsive education (Canuto & Espique, 2023).

In a study conducted in the Imvepi refugee camp, Apeta and Björg Vilhjálmsdóttir (2020) identify gender-responsive pedagogy training for primary teachers, teaching assistants, and head teachers as a crucial intervention to challenge deeply ingrained gendered attitudes and views. They found that by providing equitable learning opportunities and encouraging academic success, teaching emphasises removing existing inequalities that disproportionately impact girls. Teacher training programmes included modules on gender dynamics, bias recognition, and pedagogical approaches that accommodate various learning needs. The same study found that the Training of



Trainers (TOT) programme had a good effect on school supervisors' knowledge of gender-responsive education, including terminology, pedagogical aspects, and identifying gender-based violence in schools, as demonstrated by the (USAID, 2021). While the supervisors showed that they could provide lectures, the study clarifies that a deeper comprehension of the subject matter is necessary to use interactive learning techniques effectively.

Interestingly, a portion of supervisors upheld strict gender conventions, which made it difficult to match content to gender equity principles. The study suggests holding more refresher courses addressing deceptive gender-related cultural practices for teachers and college tutors to resolve the conflicting viewpoints. Borrowing from this study, it is evident that guiding student teachers toward gender awareness is a crucial part of tutor preparation. Tutors need to identify and dispel preconceptions about subject matter and classroom dynamics. Comprehending the intricate ways gender norms can influence education and learning is part of this (Zhou et al., 2023).

Besides training workshops, mentorship has been found to support teachers in adopting gender-responsive pedagogies. Achinstein and Davis (2014) advocate for a teacher mentoring approach focused on developing novice teachers' ability to teach topics rather than the mentorship only focusing on social-emotional support. While mentoring is usually a more intensive induction program component, it can also be used as a self-sufficient instructional and psychosocial support method for new teachers (Zembyt-ska, 2015). Not all the tutors involved in this study had engaged in gender-responsive pedagogy training, and those who had engaged had basic knowledge of handling crucial gender issues in teaching and learning. Hence, the F4L project intervention was a major exposure to most of them in gender-responsive pedagogy. Institutionalising college mentoring programmes has become essential in supporting the effectiveness of applying gender-responsive pedagogies. The integration of content-focused mentoring practices, especially in assisting the newly redeployed tutors, helped equip the student teachers with the required gender-responsive practices for their practicum sessions at the primary schools. The anticipated outcome was two-fold; while the tutors benefited from the mentoring practices, their student teachers were also learning to use gender-responsive pedagogies as a requirement in their preparation to become teachers. The tutors were supported as facilitators of learning in moving from gender-blind teaching practices to gender-awareness. The ultimate aim was to become gender-responsive facilitators of learning and, in turn, encourage their student teachers to become future gender-responsive professionals (Chapin et al., 2020). From this, it is evident that mentorship and coaching assist tutors in effectively implementing gender-responsive teaching methods, as supported by Chapin et al. (2020). This is because such an approach is more likely to support lifelong learning. It allows teachers to overcome learning obstacles and improve their teaching methods in light of real-world encounters.

The tutors were grouped into working groups under identified mentors to build individual confidence in their practices. They would meet as groups with the mentors

or on a one-on-one basis with the mentors as deemed necessary. In their groups, the tutors supported one another in planning their lessons and identifying gender-responsive teaching and learning resources and strategies. Implementing collaborative initiatives emphasising peer support seems practical for improving instructors' teaching methods (White, 2018). In addition to being positively correlated with advancements in instructional strategies, this collaborative approach is crucial in reducing teacher stress and averting burnout. According to White (2018), creating a collaborative and encouraging work atmosphere is crucial since it substantially influences teachers' well-being and effectiveness. Her study showed that using a collaborative approach with inbuilt peer support promotes the implementation of collaborative programmes in practice, improves teaching techniques, and gives teachers a more fulfilling and long-lasting professional experience. Beyond individual instruction, tutor preparation, which includes peer support and collaborative learning, can lead to sharing resources, engaging in creative methods for providing a gender-responsive education, and experiences by participating in this form of community of practice (Ullah et al., 2018).

According to Chapin and Warne (2020), effective tutor preparation in gender-responsive pedagogy requires a multi-pronged approach to capacitating teachers. First, effective tutor preparation integrates gender-responsive pedagogies directly into training programmes, enabling tutors and student teachers to become gender-responsive professionals. This involves exploring and practising teaching methods that cater to diverse learning styles, creating an environment where all students, regardless of gender, feel valued and engaged (Dowd et al., 2020). Ananga (2021) conducted a study on training Ghanaian instructors received to take gender inequalities into account when instructing their students. The survey showed that teachers in disciplines like Science, Mathematics, and English employ more gender-inclusive teaching strategies. Male and female teachers showed progress in gender-responsive practices when applying these strategies. This was a positive move to demystify the stereotypical beliefs and practices that particular disciplines are and should be male-dominated and others that should be female-dominated in tutor preparation.

Additionally, the study found that mentors who guide novice educators employ gender-sensitive tactics. The researchers advise that the government promote the employment of these teaching strategies in all academic areas. They also recommend upgrading textbooks with more material that considers gender disparities and providing teachers with ongoing training.

Secondly, tutors must be cognizant of their gender biases and address them. Llorens et al. (2021) argue that despite more awareness and efforts to encourage diversity, gender disparities in academia still exist. Among the many factors contributing to these disparities, gender prejudice is particularly noteworthy as it has a detrimental impact on the careers, work-life balance, and mental health of under-represented groups in the academic community. Cultural biases are deeply ingrained in educational settings and require explicit attention in tutor preparation. Training

should focus on equipping tutors to navigate and challenge cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequalities, ensuring a culturally sensitive approach to education.

Thirdly, tutors who are effective gender-responsive pedagogues must have various teaching and learning strategies. [Sayed Munna and Kalam \(2021\)](#) assert that using various techniques, including role-playing, discussions, rewards, and questioning, to address individual or group behaviour is essential for good classroom management. Educators must understand the classroom dynamics, modify their methods, and accommodate pupils' learning styles and demands. Teaching success depends on recognising and resolving learning obstacles like poor self-esteem or language hurdles. One important factor in increasing pupils' confidence is positive comments. Through various assessment techniques, the researchers support teachers in encouraging inclusivity, actively involving students in the learning process, and ensuring student outcomes meet expectations.

In the framework of gender-responsive education, this study explored the complex field of tutor preparation in gender-responsive pedagogy. Tutors are vital for executing teacher preparation and determining how well pupils learn. It is critical to comprehend how tutor preparation advances the inclusivity and equality that educational institutions want to promote.

This article highlights the importance of tutor preparation in promoting gender-responsive education and emphasizes the importance of teacher professional development in incorporating gender-sensitive pedagogies.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

With a focus on gathering descriptive and non-numerical data to develop a comprehensive understanding of the topic, the research approach used in this study is qualitative. For a more thorough examination of how participants' training impacted their pedagogical processes and instructional practices, qualitative approaches are especially well-suited for probing participants' thoughts, feelings, and attitudes.

The study adheres to a pragmatic philosophical worldview to preserve a complete approach. Pragmatism promotes practicality and utility as a philosophical stance, emphasising the integration of subjective and objective ideas. This worldview was selected to guarantee a fair and useful assessment of the participant's experiences and the noted results.

The study participants are tutors from particular colleges in various regions. The focal points for data collection were colleges A and B in Uganda, college C in Tanzania, and college D in Kenya. The diversified selection of colleges makes a thorough investigation of the effects of gender-responsive training in various educational environments possible.

Data collection techniques like focus group discussions, interviews, tutor use of reflective journals, and participants' viewpoints were thoroughly explored to provide real-time experiences of the participants. Focus group discussions of six to eight heterogeneous members were held with tutors and student teachers separately. These

enabled the researchers to gather collective insights into the gender-related practices of the participants. One-on-one interviews were held with each of the identified ten (five male and five female) college tutors and six (three year one and three year two) student teachers from each of the four colleges. In total, 40 tutors and 24 student teachers were interviewed to provide insight into personal leans and pre-held experiences of gender integration in teacher preparation. The entries from the tutors' reflective journals further highlighted more personal and sometimes sensitive gender-related concerns that the participants may not have volunteered through the other techniques. The journals also revealed the tutors' growth and challenges in implementing gender-responsive pedagogy in their practices. These qualitative methods made possible comprehensive and contextually based comprehension of the participants' experiences. In addition, as part of the data analysis process, the gathered information was methodically examined and interpreted to find themes, patterns, and insights that advance our understanding of how gender-responsive training affects pedagogical practices.

Using a qualitative approach with a philosophical foundation in pragmatism, this study aimed to offer insightful information about the usefulness of gender-responsive training in the educational setting of the chosen colleges.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study presents the findings regarding gender-responsiveness learned from the tutors. A follow-up exercise in the practicum schools revealed a positive impact of gender-responsive pedagogy intervention on the student teachers and the learners in the primary schools.

### 3.1. Positive Shifts in Tutor Attitudes and Perceptions

Teacher attitudes affect student achievement, even when they are not explicit. This echoes the outcomes of a study in Italy, where girls assigned to teachers with implicit gender bias underperformed in mathematics and chose less demanding secondary schools, following teachers' recommendations ([Carlana et al., 2023](#)).

Anecdotal and practical evidence indicated shifts in norms and stereotypes the college tutors previously exhibited, including those they had learned from early childhood. Tutors indicated that despite their awareness of the need for the implementation of gender-responsive pedagogies and the need to create gender-sensitive environments in their practices, they lacked the knowledge and skills to do so. They admitted that they had previously remained strongly affiliated to their pre-conceived beliefs that gender issue was a prerogative of female practitioners and that male learners rightly dominated STEM disciplines.

The resulting shifts in attitudes and perceptions saw a male tutor establish and patronise the gender club in C Teachers College, where student teachers identified and deliberated on emerging gender concerns. The club members created gender-related messages strategically mounted in vantage positions in the college compound. One tutor in D College talked of his increased confidence in handling gender issues in the college:



*I had never had an interest in teaching gender issues. I did not even know how to make my teaching to be gender-responsive. I avoided giving any views on gender matters since I could not tell much about what was right or not right. I have become conscious of the appropriate language to use inside and outside the classroom, and I try to use gender-based differentiated instruction as much as possible. (Tutor, D College)*

Such a change in tutors supports implementing a whole-school approach to increase awareness and recognise and correct unintentional gender bias that could limit learners' aspirations and expectations.

This, in turn, supports the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which, in addition to calling on countries to make education systems gender-sensitive, also indicates that educators need to be open to girls' and boys' choices and help them explore who they are, connect to people around them and gain self-confidence, well-being, peer acceptance, and social support (Lahelma, 2011).

### 3.2. Enhanced Use of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy

Observations in the classroom show a marked improvement in the tutors' and teachers' application of gender-responsive pedagogy and tactics during class discussions. When gender-responsive pedagogy is used in their teaching and learning processes, tutors of both genders show enhanced learning outcomes and higher student involvement and participation. "In my science lessons now, the ratio is 5:5 in terms of male to female participation, compared to 2:5 previously," a science tutor noted, highlighting the change.

These institutions have demonstrated gender-responsiveness in higher education by providing female instructors and student teachers with fundamental life skills and moral guidance. This empowerment allows them to speak up openly and self-assuredly in the community and school. A shift in gender norms has been observed as women have assumed leadership roles and responsibilities previously held by men. 5 out of 12 subject departments and 15 out of 38 student leadership positions, for example, are currently run by women at A Primary Teachers' College. Evidence shows that the other three colleges have followed a similar trend of increasing the number of female tutors and student teachers in leadership positions.

Teachers actively implement gender equality concepts in classroom discourses and academic procedures, enhancing gender awareness in educational institutions today. College communities, including cooperating schools, aggressively encourage men and women to demonstrate their abilities in various settings, including the classroom.

#### 3.2.1. Innovative Gender Techniques in Teaching

The study found creative gender-based teaching strategies tutors use to build inclusive and dynamic learning environments. One of these strategies is creative grouping, in which various student groups are assembled to promote cooperation and a range of viewpoints. This follows the positive outcome of grouping in a study by Zhan et al. (2015), where males performed better in mixed groupings

than when in male single groupings, balanced groups such as two-male, two-female, and single-female groups outperformed other groups. Finally, the study also revealed that gender differences mainly exist in attitude rather than learning achievement. Further support for mixed-gender grouping in situations of higher learning is captured in a study by Willoughby et al. (2009) that found that students engaged in more collaborative behaviours in mixed-gender groups than in same-gender groups. Willoughby et al. further indicate that such collaboration leads to 'healthy emerging adult development' (Willoughby et al., 2009, p. 34).

The division of duties and responsibilities ensures equal participation and leadership chances for both genders. These innovations aim to develop vital life skills and dismantle conventional gender-related restrictions. By encouraging students to examine and question gender norms, the tactics also foster critical thinking in the classroom. Flexible approach adaptation by tutors fosters an inclusive and adaptable learning environment. Overall, these cutting-edge methods support the development of a classroom environment where all students, regardless of gender, can succeed academically and personally by challenging conventional gender conventions.

This study's results are consistent with those of Ananga (2021). Both studies show a discernible improvement in tutors' application of gender-responsive pedagogy, particularly in foundational courses like Science, Math, and English. Both male and female tutors exhibit this encouraging trend, indicating a shared dedication to include gender-sensitive teaching methods. Furthermore, both studies note an improvement in mentors' application of gender-responsive mentoring techniques. The consistency of the results highlights the wider influence of gender-responsive practices in mentoring programmes and classroom instruction. With implications for forming educational policies and practices, this consistency highlights how crucial it is to systematically incorporate gender-sensitive pedagogy into initial teacher training program.

#### 3.2.2. Early Integration of Gender Sensitivity

To implant ideas of gender equality from the beginning, the study highlights the vital significance of incorporating gender sensitivity into early childhood education. The need to integrate gender-sensitive practices into play, learning activities, and everyday interactions is acknowledged by educators. Creating an inclusive environment that questions gender norms, exposes children to a range of viewpoints, and fosters an equality mentality is the main goal. This follows the understanding of the importance of early childhood education in developing deeply engrained gender norms in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). It emerged during one of the discussions by student teachers during a session in ECCE that early childhood learners learned gender skills from interaction with adults, which is when they acquired personality attributes and career aspirations. One student teacher said:

*We cannot wait until these children get to primary school, secondary school, and college levels of education and start introducing them to gender issues and*

concerns. It becomes difficult to undo what they had learned and believed in from early childhood. They grow up having conflicts in their minds and not knowing who they are properly [sic]. The policy on gender in education should be taken seriously as early as possible. (Student teacher)

Specific steps made by educators to embrace inclusive teaching methods and resources are described to guarantee representation and worth for both male and female students. These include the use of inclusive language, gender-conscious use of teaching and learning resources, management of sexual maturation for both boys and girls, improving access, retention, and transition levels, and improved gender relations within learning institutions. These steps are taken so that the student teachers model them in their practices during and beyond their practicum. Still, these results are not in direct agreement with the findings of Kreitz-Sandberg (2016) whose study explored the more general impact of gender inclusion in education. The study (Kreitz-Sandberg, 2016) highlights the context in which gender-sensitive policies and competencies are supported in a variety of educational programmes, including preschool teacher education and pedagogical courses at the university level, in Sweden. The study results showed how complex gender inclusion in education is and how varied are its effects, depending on the environment.

### 3.2.3. Constructive Feedback and Motivation

Classroom interactions, if not checked, can portray unintended gender biases. Constructive feedback should seek to improve learning and be non-judgemental based on observed behaviours. Because of their tendency to talk more and be more proactive, male students are usually called upon more frequently than female counterparts to respond to questions by tutors. This may intimidate other students, especially girls. Some studies also show that female students are less likely to raise their hands and less likely to seek the attention of teachers and peers (Laurie et al., 2007). On the other hand, due to varying socialisation, some female student teachers may find it difficult to give feedback to male tutors. This study demonstrates how incentive and constructive feedback can be included in gender-responsive education. From classroom observations, teachers make deliberate efforts to give students individualised feedback that considers their unique strengths and weaknesses. An inclusive learning environment that encourages active involvement and higher learning outcomes is the goal of the shift toward gender-sensitive feedback. This scenario evoked animated reactions in an ECCE Year Two class in one of the colleges.

*Tutor: Why is it necessary to pay great attention to gender issues in the early years?*

*(There is a long pause, and student teachers begin to murmur among themselves)*

*Tutor: Hassan (Pseudonym), why should we pay attention to early years learners ...? (Hassan takes time before responding)*

*Chorus: Early years learners do not have any issues ... they do not understand their differences yet ... even if there are, they cannot be serious ... )*

*Hassan: Sir, if we do not consider them now, they will develop ideas that will be difficult to change later.*

*Tutor: See, it is a male student who gives such a bright idea, ladies, where are you? I expected this answer from the ladies and not from a man.*

The tutor's feedback discouraged female student teachers from talking in the class. While the tutor's feedback may have been encouraging for Hassan, it gave the stereotypical impression that male students know less about gender in their early years and probably less about early years.

Teaching professionals stress the value of inspiring male or female students with methods that consider their needs and goals. Overall, the research shows a dedication to fostering a friendly environment wherein individualised criticism and encouragement help to influence gender norms in the classroom positively. The research results are consistent with those of Mamoon-Al-Bashir et al. (2016), who highlight the value of feedback in improving the learning process. Constructive feedback is important in gender-responsive teaching, and this study emphasises how it can help learners become more motivated and achieve better results. The research and existing literature emphasise the necessity of reassessing conventional feedback methods in education. Beyond that, the study shows how gender-sensitive feedback makes a classroom more welcoming to all students. Mamoon-Al-Bashir et al. (2016) emphasise contemporary, technology-based feedback methods consistent with the literature and advocate for a move away from conventional feedback techniques. To fulfil students' changing requirements and improve their learning experiences, this study, like that of Mamoon-Al-Bashir et al. (2016) found that feedback is essential to professionalising teaching, particularly in higher education.

### 3.2.4. Transformation of Educational Institutions

Regarding creating gender-responsive learning environments, the study indicates a substantial shift in educational institutions, offering the education sector a motivating lesson. The Foundations for Learning (F4L) Project intervention worked with college tutors to transform the academic, social, and physical environments into becoming more gender-responsive. Parental and community engagement strategies were introduced during the workshops. Through this, it would be possible to bring important stakeholders, such as parents, students, and instructors, on board to participate actively in this process. Formulating goals and objectives focused on behaviour change is made possible via the joint efforts of educators, community members, and students. A more inclusive educational ecosystem is fostered through structured meetings that encourage safe discussions on gender-responsive issues in and outside the schools and colleges. The student council became more conscious of this and showed increased awareness of having more female students represented in the available positions and roles. This environment enhanced the critical ability of student teachers and school pupils to challenge gender stereotypes.

The findings emphasise the significance of group action and collaboration among diverse stakeholders to bring about beneficial changes in educational practices and ultimately create a more responsive and equitable learning environment (INEE, 2010).

### 3.3. Increased Enrollment and Reduced Dropout Rates

The study shows that implementing gender-responsive pedagogical training led to a notable rise in enrollment and a decrease in dropout rates in colleges and primary schools. In one of the colleges, student teachers were allowed to resume classes with their babies, some of whom were still breastfeeding. They were provided with special accommodations and arrangements to enable them to attend to their babies. The positive effect is scaled down to the practicum and demonstration schools that the colleges work with. The results highlight a promising trend, with a notable increase in female primary school and college enrollment. Concurrently, there has been a discernible decline in the dropout rate, indicating a positive trend toward enhanced retention and completion rates. The increased emphasis on gender-responsiveness among teachers is responsible for this beneficial effect on enrollment and retention. In Nachingwea District, the Executive Director mentioned the increased number of girls in schools to 97% in 2023 and their high transition rate to secondary schools. Teachers actively identify and support disadvantaged male and female students by offering bursaries and necessities, motivated by a growing awareness of gender issues.

This assistance system has greatly aided a greater percentage of students completing their education. Educational institutions have installed gender-responsive physical amenities to foster inclusivity, such as separate restrooms and latrines for each gender. Implementing initiatives such as the construction of female-only changing facilities has further improved the learning environment and created a welcoming climate that has lowered the dropout rate and increased enrollment. These results highlight the transformative power of gender-responsive education in enhancing academic performance.

At some point, one of the colleges could not raise male teams to compete in the inter-college games because there were only about 50 male student teachers out of a total population of 187 students. This number increased significantly in the subsequent two years. There has been a greater understanding of student needs, and more counselling services have been implemented to support them.

Testimonials from participants, such as a teacher stating, "We have a changing room for our girls, and now they feel confident in their times [when in their menstrual cycle]," and a tutor noting, "Our students are allowed to go to their dormitories freely if the need arises and have mobile phones to call any tutor in case of a challenge," highlight the practical impact of these facilities.

### 3.4. Changes in Gender Dynamics and Behaviors

There is reliable evidence of positive changes in the gender dynamics, behaviours, and attitudes of both female and male students within the classroom. Deputy principals of Teacher Colleges have reported a shift towards utilising group work and a specific focus on gender equality in

teaching methodologies. These changes signify a conscious effort to foster inclusivity and equality within the educational setting, promoting collaborative and supportive learning environments.

#### 3.4.1. Supportive Language and Sensitization on Menstruation

The research emphasises the importance of using supportive language and sensitization programmes to address menstruation-related concerns in school settings. This was realised by analysing the attendance registers managed by student teachers during practicum. There were patterns of absenteeism among adolescent girls in primary schools, most of which were confirmed to be happening during their menstruation times. The reasons for girls missing school during such occasions include lack of sanitary towels due to poverty, physical discomfort, no emergency painkillers, and no water and proper changing rooms; the worst of the reasons is the negative attitude and stigma attached to menstruation.

Menstruation, which is a normal development in life, which, in turn, causes fear and anxiety in girls and leaves them unprepared for menstruation (Chandra-Mouli & Patel, 2017). Student teacher presentations on misconceptions associated with menstruation include not being discussed at home or in school, being portrayed as dirty, an ashaming situation, or readiness for sex. As a result, adolescents develop many gaps in this topic.

Teachers need to establish a culture of understanding, empathy, and respect for the experiences of girls navigating menstruation by promoting the use of positive and encouraging language. This linguistic strategy helps to create a more welcoming and comfortable atmosphere that facilitates candid conversations on reproductive health. Simultaneously, efforts are being made to sensitise male and female pupils to increase awareness, bursting myths and reducing the stigma attached to menstruation. To ensure that menstruation education becomes a regular and accepted aspect of the educational process, these activities may include educational seminars, conversations, or integrated curriculum elements. Additionally, the research investigated how these initiatives foster the development of a positive atmosphere in educational settings. This entails dismantling taboos and eradicating shame in addition to pushing for laws that make access to private restrooms and menstrual hygiene products easier, as well as a larger cultural movement that recognises menstruation as a normal aspect of women's health. In summary, menstrual sensitisation and supportive language integration provide a welcoming, inclusive, and compassionate learning environment.

This study, like the one by Fahs and Perianes (2020) highlight a revolutionary change in menstrual education, which departs from traditional school-centric methods. First, to shatter taboos, promote inclusivity, and lessen stigma, the study concentrates on introducing supportive language and sensitisation programmes into school environments. It pushes for supporting menstrual health policies in schools. A transnational approach illustrating a more thorough and inclusive approach to menstrual education in educational institutions is also required (Fahs



& Perianes, 2020). This approach goes beyond standard classroom interventions by incorporating human rights or justice-based learning concepts and strongly emphasising health literacy. Based on a dynamic landscape transcending traditional boundaries, findings indicate a beneficial development in menstrual education practices.

### 3.4.2. Avoiding Gender Stereotypes in Language and Materials

In a diverse community, the study highlights how crucial it is to avoid using gender stereotypes in language and educational materials. It emphasises the necessity of using language that is sensitive to gender and calls for the avoidance of materials and slogans that reinforce stereotypes or present men as superior. This project's component demonstrates a dedication to creating a welcoming and equal learning environment. The study attempts to establish a learning environment that respects and celebrates the diversity of viewpoints, abilities, and contributions of all genders by promoting language and materials that challenge traditional gender conventions. The main objective is to confront and demolish deeply embedded preconceptions to provide a more impartial and balanced portrayal in instructional materials (INEE, 2010).

## 4. CONCLUSION

Through applying gender-responsive pedagogy, the research presents an engaging story of how a project transformed educational practices to address conventional and emerging needs. The study points out that when teachers are effectively equipped to tackle complex issues like gender inequality, the educational process can become even more influential as a force for social change. With an emphasis on the beneficial effects on student engagement and learning results, the study highlights a notable improvement in adopting gender-sensitive teaching techniques. Women's leadership positions in educational institutions have been promoted by the empowerment of female instructors, which has expanded female participation and challenged old gender stereotypes—innovative teaching practices, including equal responsibility distribution and creative grouping, which foster dynamic and inclusive classrooms.

The complexity of bringing about the aforementioned emphasises the early integration of gender sensitivity. Using constructive feedback techniques emphasise the importance of feedback in enhancing inclusive and stimulating learning environments. Gender-responsive learning settings are becoming the norm in the project teacher colleges, reflecting broader community societal shifts and highlighting the need for group action. The comprehensive effects of gender-responsive education facilitated by the project are highlighted by higher female enrollment, lower dropout rates, and supportive infrastructure like gender-responsive facilities.

While the incorporation of supportive language and menstruation sensitisation programmes adds to a more compassionate learning environment, positive improvements in gender dynamics within classrooms signal an intentional attempt to create tolerance and equality. The

study highlights the significance of steering clear of gender stereotypes in materials and language to foster an environment of learning that questions established gender norms.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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