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Call for papers for Focus Issue - Vol. 14, Issue 2 (Year 2024)

Gender Equality in Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Experiences and Lessons to Learn

Issue Editor: Branislava Baranović

Despite progress and positive developments, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic revealed and additionally deepened gender and sexuality-based inequalities.

The same is true for education, for which school closure, physical distancing, quarantine, hygiene, and other measures to prevent the spreading of Covid-19 infection have been rigorously implemented. These measures have brought significant changes and challenges to schools and the lives of teachers, students and parents, especially to women and vulnerable students (Blundell et al., 2021).

The impacts of the pandemic measures on schooling from a gender perspective were profound globally. They have affected women's lives in both high- and low-income countries, although to varying degrees. Even in Iceland, which is regarded as 'a gender equality paradise', as Hjálmsdóttira and Bjarnadóttirb (2020) write, the pandemic effects indicate 'a backlash in terms of gender equality and power positions in the home'.

In addition to juggling multiple roles and duties in families, teachers also suffer the challenges posed by the transition to online teaching and learning, resulting in their burnout and increased stress. Zabaniotou (2020) points out that the gender-based effects of the Covid-19 pandemic also negatively affect female academics in higher education by reducing their opportunities to work on research projects and articles compared to men. Students at all levels of schooling have also been affected in many ways by the measures of the Covid pandemic. According to estimates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 100 million children are expected to lag behind minimum standards in key competencies such as reading and math, with losses in learning and getting back on track is particularly challenging for girls. It is estimated that 20 million girls will not be able to go back to school due to increased social and economic difficulties, gender-based violence during extended time spent at home, increased household responsibilities, increased adolescent pregnancies and less availability of ICT equipment, all leading to mental health difficulties, reduced motivation to learn and learning losses (Friedman et al., 2021; Global Education Monitoring Report, UNESCO, 2021).

The most marginalised groups of students, including girls, such as those with low socioeconomic status, students with disabilities and students living in remote and rural areas, are among those most affected. Coming from disadvantaged families and social



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backgrounds, they face various constraints on successful learning, which has exacerbated their situation, especially during the pandemic. Coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, these students are more likely to experience stress and poorer learning outcomes caused by chronic poverty, lack of stimulating teaching materials, including ICT equipment, lack of parental learning experience, and less parental time invested in their learning, to name just a few aggravating conditions (Doyle, 2020).

Studies (Gato et al., 2020; Gonzalez, 2021) also point to the pandemic disproportionately negatively impacting the LGBTQ+ community as a particularly marginalised and vulnerable group. Covid-19 measures, especially school and university closures, have confined LGBTQ+ students to traumatic and abusive experiences they face in their families and surroundings. These pandemic measures have deprived many of them of psychological and identity-development support networks and confined some of them to families that are not safe places to live and learn (Salerno et al., 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic is a new, unknown phenomenon that affects the lives and education of people and children around the world. Its sudden outbreak and severe consequences for the lives of students, teachers, and parents and for the functioning of schools and universities raise questions that gender and education researchers need to address.

This special call invites all researchers in the gender and education field to discuss, explore, deconstruct and question critically: how has the pandemic affected gender and sexuality diverse groups at all levels of schooling in individual countries or/and globally; what strategies and measures have been implemented to protect these vulnerable groups; to what extent have women and LGBTQ+ people been included in the development of strategies to cope with effects of the pandemic; what lessons have been learned from the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic for the future?

The intention of this special issue of the CEPS Journal is to critically reflect on and address these and other questions related to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on diverse gender and sexuality groups from various theoretical perspectives and using different methodological approaches.

Article submission timeline:

30 December 2022: submission of paper title and abstract with up to five keywords [250 words max.]

30 September 2023: paper submission [between 5,000 and 7,000 words]

June 2024: publication of the focus issue of the CEPS journal

Please send the abstract to editors@cepsj.si clearly stating the title of the focus issue.

Manuscripts should be from 5,000 to 7,000 words long, including the abstract and reference list. They should be written in UK English. Submissions should be original and unpublished work not currently under review by another journal or publisher.



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When preparing the manuscript, please follow our author's guidelines, which are available here: <https://cepsj.si/index.php/cepsj/about/submissions>.

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