Measuring Gender in Education

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Different Conceptualizations of Gender

Parity

- Redistribution
- Equal representation or distribution across groups
- Easily measurable - by EFA and MDGs
- Gender parity indices - 1.0 for boys; girls are the variation
Different Conceptualizations of Gender

Equity

- Assumes different experiences, and in turn, different inputs, processes and outcomes
- Is multidimensional and dynamic
- Considers historical differences affecting present conditions and experiences
- Complex and diverse measures

Joan DeJaeghere, U of Minnesota, Nov 2014
Conceptualizing Gender

Noun: Gender as a static category
*girl/boy
*women/men

Adjective: Gender as defined through ideology, norms, and beliefs
*feminine/masculine
*relational

Verb: gender as produced through daily actions
*dynamic
*performativity

Person/Group
Epistemological Considerations for “Measuring Gender”

- What are the historical, social and economic dynamics that construct “gender” in the sites where you work?
- How is gender understood (differently) by different actors?
- How does gender relate to material realities and other social identities (e.g. class, race, ability)?
- How do local knowledges help to understand how to transform inequalities?
Gender as a Noun: Parity Measures

- Sex-disaggregated data on:
  - School attendance, achievement
  - Teachers
  - Representation of women/men in textbooks

- What can be missed: the case of CARE India
Gender as an Adjective: norms, representations, messages, actions

- In curriculum
- In pedagogy – teaching and learning styles
- In school culture and activities
  - Areas of study
  - Extra-curricular activities
  - Teacher expectations outside the subject of study
  - Boys-girls relations
Processes for Constructing “Measures”

- Considered the types of questions and responses; how do they construct particular ideas of gender, of equality
- Elicited ideas from local staff of the gender issues relevant in the program and in the community
- Reviewed, translated, piloted and revised questions
Gender Norms about Schooling (CARE, USA)

- Questions designed as relational – girls, boys or both
- Can be used with girls and boys, teachers, parents or community members
- May assume “both” is equality
- Change in responses over time shows equity shifts
Example Questionnaire: Gender Norms About Schooling

Girls  Boys  Both

○ Who is more intelligent?

○ Who is better at school?

○ Who is able to speak up when they don’t understand?

○ Who is able to speak up when they know an answer to a problem?
Gender Norms beyond Schooling
CARE’s Gender Equitable Index (GEI)

- Can be responded to by girls/boys
- Developed for different age groups
- Asks about desired norms in the household (private); work and community (public)
- Response is level of agreement with statement
- Focus on equality *within* and *through* education
Example GEI Questions: Public Roles and Practices Statements

Disagree Strongly       Disagree Somewhat       Agree Somewhat       Agree Strongly

- Women have the right to hold leadership positions in the community.
- It is okay for mothers to work for pay outside the home.
- Both boys and girls get better jobs if they complete primary school than if they don’t.
- It is a father’s responsibility to earn money for his family. (asked also about mothers)
Example GEI Questions: Household and Interpersonal Relations Statements

Disagree Strongly  Disagree Somewhat  Agree Somewhat  Agree Strongly

- It is okay for fathers to stay at home to care for children.
- A husband and wife should decide together if they want to have children.
- I respect a man who walks away from a fight.
- If I heard a woman insulting a man, I would tell the woman to stop. (also asked about a man)
Gender as Verb: Produced in Daily Actions

• Doing gender – how norms and social identities are enacted and reproduced in schooling processes

• Undoing gender – how identities and norms are flexible and change, slowly through individual-by-individual interactions
“Measuring Gender”: Qualitative and Longitudinal data

- Qualitative questions and observations, eg., daily diaries
- Longitudinal to capture change over time and in different contexts and situations
Understanding Gender as Performance

Teachers interactions with girls and boys

- How do teachers call on, ask questions, or respond to girls/boys?
- What do teachers intend through these interactions? What do students implicitly learn?
- Girls and boys interactions with each other
Gender as performed in the curriculum: doing or undoing?

- How are girls and boys discussed in terms of their education, future activities, relationships?
- How are conflicts about gendered expectations responded to in the classroom?
- Example: “women bus drivers” (Tanzania, 2010)
Gender performed through pedagogy

- Classroom of young men (13) and women (8) discussing entrepreneurship in South Africa

- Topic was discrimination and prejudice

- Female instructor showed videos of different types of discrimination and then elicited discussion –
  o to discuss both experiences student have that relate, and
  o the assumptions they hold

- Showed a BBC tongue-in-cheek video about roles of women and men, including one implying women are bad drivers and another implying men are cheaters
• Teacher: So what do you think about these roles this video portrays?
• Male: shares an example of how women don’t heed traffic signs and says: “men do”!
• Teacher: Can you give me more examples of when this is true?
• Female: I don’t drive but my brother does and he thinks it is women who don’t drive well. (conversation continues)
• Male: “Women drive less than men”; a young woman tries to interrupt and contest this.
• Teacher: “Our assumptions are the ways in which discrimination starts”.
• The discussion continues about other assumptions of men being “cheaters”.
• As it becomes more heated about assumptions of women, the teacher turns to the women and says: “Women, you are not allowed to study here.” She then asked them to all walk out of the class.
What are the ways as staff that we enact gender in our daily interactions with those whom we work?

What intentional discussions do we have about gender and how are they facilitated?

Are we comfortable with no closure to our programmatic definitions and measures?

How do we foster change through narratives, stories and community dialogues?
In Closing...

- Thank you
- Merci beaucoup
- Bedankt

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