



Editorial

Special Issue of International Perspectives on Equality and Diversity:

Intersectional aspects of schools related Gender-based violence in Europe

Guest Editorial team for International Perspectives on Equality and Diversity (IPED)

Professor Maria Tsouroufli, Department of Education, Brunel University London, UK

Dr Heidi Siller, Psychologist and Senior Scientist, Medical University Innsbruck, Gender Medicine Unit, Austria

Dr Angela Morgan, Senior Researcher and Lead of the Violence against Women and Girls Research Cluster, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Dr Dorottya Redai, Independent scholar, Hungary

Dr Valentina Guerrini, Post Doc Researcher of Education, Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literatures and Psychology, University of Florence

This special issue aims to raise understanding about school related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in Europe. Terminology of gender and violence varies across cultural and social contexts. In this call we refer to schools related gender based violence

(SRGBV) as 'acts of sexual, physical or psychological violence inflicted on children in and

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around schools because of stereotypes and roles or norms attributed to or expected of them because of their sex or gendered identity and enforced by unequal power dynamics. The term also refers to the differences between girls' and boys' experience of and vulnerabilities to violence' (<https://en.unesco.org/themes/school-violence-and-bullying/school-related-gender-based-violence>). Although the exact consequences of SRGBV for retention and achievement have not been established, it is widely recognized that SRGBV has negative implications for health and well-being, educational success and participation (Green et al, 2013; Burde et al., 2015; Leach et al. 2013).

Research into SRGBV is still extremely limited outside of Sub-Saharan Africa and to a lesser extent Northern Europe. Very little research in Europe has explicitly addressed the gender dimensions of violence in schools, and bullying for example is often discussed in gender and race neutral terms (Ringrose and Renold, 2010). There is also little research as yet on SRGBV which goes beyond examining heterosexual forms of violence perpetrated mostly by male teachers and students on female students (Leach and Humphreys, 2007), despite evidence showing that male students, female teachers, those who are from ethnic minority groups or who suffer from physical or learning difficulties those who are identified as lesbian or gay are also at risk of SRGBV (Magić and Selun, 2018 Peguero, 2011). In order to address this gap in the literature and raise understanding of how different strands of diversity might intersect in practices and experiences of SRGBV across socio-political and cultural contexts in Europe, we invited

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contributions from academics and practitioners whose work explores how intersecting inequalities and identities might be implicated in understandings and performances of SRGBV as well as in the design of intervention and prevention programmes in schools. For this special issue we did not use a specific definition of intersectionality but instead we welcomed various aspects of intersectional work on school related gender-based violence in Europe.

This special issue on SRGBV includes five papers discussing intersectional aspects of SRGBV and different forms of SRGBV, two papers from Austria (two papers), one from Hungary, one from Italy, and one from England. The first paper entitled '*Reacting to adolescent suicide– taking a resilience-based approach in schools*' by Heidi Siller, Ruth Warger and Barbara Juen, focuses on adolescent suicide as one form of gender-based violence and how schools might be supported after a student's suicide, paying attention to the intersections of personal and social factors, including age and gender and power (domination, control and empowerment) and inclusion/exclusion in relation to the prevalence of suicide, bereavement, and the interventions after suicide. Although adolescent suicide has received sufficient attention in the field of psychology, the intersectionality of gender, inclusion/exclusion at societal level and auto-aggression has been under-researched. The second paper reports on an online survey of nearly 700 LGBTIQ youth in Vienna, Austria. Karin Schönplugg's and Klappeer's paper '*The significance of empowering social relations: Challenges for LGBTIQ students in Vienna*'

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confirms previous findings about the substantial rates of gender-based violence incidents against non-heterosexual students in schools and Universities. However, their paper also demonstrates the positive effects of peer, family and school support on the mental health of LGBTIQ youth and how resisting heteronormativity can enhance their mental health and quality of life. This paper makes an important contribution to understanding complex intersections of gender, sexuality, mental health in school settings and beyond. Redai's paper *'Intersections of gender, sexual orientation and gender-based violence in Hungarian schools'* focuses on three types of SRGBV: sexual harassment of girls by boys; same sex violence; and homophobic violence in Hungarian schools and explores the intersections of gender with sexuality in perceptions and performances of school related gender-based violence. Guerrini's paper explores intersections of gender and religion in experiences of SRGBV, in particular verbal and sexual violence in the Italian context. Her interesting paper offers insights into the experiences of Muslim girls who wear hijab. The contributions from Hungary and Italy report on research that took place in aggressively anti gender equality educational contexts shaped by recent socio-political changes and national cultures. The last paper in this special issue by M.Tsouroufli *'School related gender-based violence in England: An intersectional approach'* focuses on two important issues; the intersections of teachers' gender assumptions with stereotypical perceptions of Islam and ethnicity; and the intersections of gender with sexual norms in constructions and acts of verbal and physical violence in schools in England.

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The articles in this special issue offer insights from national and cultural contexts in Europe which face different challenges at educational, socio-political and societal level. The various intersections discussed in this special issue highlight the complexity of the concept of SRGBV and the need for further research that could inform the theorization of intersectionality and SRGBV.

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