

BEDU305 Sociology of Education: Gender Equality, Culture and Values

ECTS Value: 3 ECTS

Overall Objectives and Outcomes

Gender equality is a fundamental characteristic of democratic citizenship, one that is intrinsically immersed in all aspects of society. While significant global progress towards gender equality has been made, women and girls in many parts of the world still endure inequality in several spheres of society including those of politics, the economy and education. This study-unit will delve into the issue of gender equality in the educational context from a sociological point of view. It will enable learners to gain a better insight into the influence of society in determining the relationship between gender and education while making them more aware of the measures being adopted for the promotion of gender equality on a national, European and international level.

The definition of gender roles and the discourse on the distinct behaviours and achievements of men and women are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture of a society. Meanwhile, a person's values and cultural identity are the foundation of his or her well-being, determining the person's life choices and influencing his or her relationship with other members of society. Education, culture and values are core aspects of society which are interrelated and have a profound impact on each other. With reference to the works of various sociologists, this study-unit will approach the aspect of culture and values in a twofold manner. While examining the role of education in the transmission of culture and values, it will discuss how cultural dispositions and values impact students' participation in education.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

Competences

- create a presentation outlining a number of sociological perspectives with regard to gender equality in education;
- collaborate with others in evaluating the local measures taken in promoting gender equality vis-à-vis those taken at European and international levels;
- establish the relationship between education, culture and values and determine the ways in which these aspects of society impact each other.

Knowledge

- distinguish different sociological perspectives pertaining to gender equality within an educational context;
- identify the various measures taken by national (ex. NCPE and MEDE), European (ex. EU and Council of Europe) and international (ex. UNICEF, EIGE and UNESCO) organisations and institutions for the promotion of gender equality;
- demonstrate a sound theoretical background on the function of education in the transmission of culture and values.

Skills

- a. demonstrate a deep understanding and knowledge of the various sociological theories of education which centre on gender equality;
- b. use a variety of sources to gather information on the initiatives taken by various organisations and institutions which focus on eliminating gender inequalities within the educational system;
- c. show that s/he can critically review key texts and policy documents which highlight the impacts of culture and values on education and vice versa;
- d. critically evaluate the measures taken by Maltese institutions and organisations for promoting gender equality in education;
- e. appraise whether these measures are in line with those being implemented at European and global levels;
- f. identify the role of education in the transmission of culture and values while examining how these, in turn, impact the participation of students in education;
- g. report on the major sociological theories of education in relation to gender equality;
- h. express his/her opinion on whether the measures being taken at the local level are effective in promoting gender equality in the education system;
- i. interact with other learners to discuss the relationship between culture, values and education;
- j. keep abreast of statistics pertaining to gender equality and of targets set by international organisations which aim to eliminate gender disparities within an educational context;
- k. research various sources to expand his/her knowledge in the area of gender equality;
- l. investigate the interdependence between education, culture and values.

Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Critical analysis, presentations, online forum discussions.

Suggested Readings

Core Reading List:

1. Briguglio, B. and Brown, M. (eds.) (2016). *Sociology of the Maltese Islands*. Malta: Agenda.
2. Haralambos and Holborn (2013) *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives* (8th edition). Harper Collins Publishers Ltd.
3. Suarez, O. and Baolian Qin-Hilliard, D. (2004). *Globalization, Culture and Education in the New Millennium*. London, England: University of California Press, Ltd.

Supplementary Reading List:

1. European Union (2016). Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016 – 2019. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/strategic_engagement_en.pdf
2. IASC (2006) Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different needs, equal opportunities. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/hac/network/interagency/news/gender_handbook_draft/en/
3. NCPE (2017). Annual Report 2016. Retrieved from https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Documents/Our_Publications_and_Resources/Annual_Reports/NCPE%20AR%202016%20Lo%20res.pdf