

Primary Level Teachers' Response to Gender Representation in Textbook Contents

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Abstract : This paper explores ten primary teachers' views on gender representation in primary-level textbooks altogether. Data was collected from the teachers who taught in private schools in Kailali and Kathmandu District. This research uses a semi-structured interview method to obtain information regarding teachers' attitudes toward gender representations in textbook content. The interview data were analysed by using critical skills of qualitative research analysis methods, as suggested by Saldana and Omasta (2018). The findings revealed that most of the teachers were unaware and regarded gender issues as insignificant to discuss in primary-level classes. Most of them responded to the questions personally and claimed that there were no gender issues in their classrooms. Some of the teachers connected gender issues with contexts other than textbook representations, such as school discrimination in the distribution of salary among male and female teachers, school practices of awarding girls rather than boys as the most disciplined students, following girls' first rule in the assembly marching, encouraging only girls in the stage shows, and involving students in gender-specific activities such as decorating works for girls and physical tasks for boys. The interview also revealed teachers' covert gendered attitudes in their remarks. Nevertheless, most of the teachers accepted that gender-biased contents have an impact on learners, and this problem can be solved with more gender-centred research in the education field, discussions, and training to increase awareness regarding gender issues. Agreeing with the suggestion of teachers, this paper recommends proper training and awareness regarding how to confront gender issues in textbooks.

Keywords : content analysis, gender equality, school education, critical awareness

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