

Integrating the gender dimension into teaching, learning and educational outreach in initial teacher education – MIC, MU and IT Sligo.

Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project (See Appendix 1) have been running concurrently during 2022 and early 2023.

Research has been undertaken from March 2022, gathering data from pre-service teachers, and teacher educators from early childhood, primary, second level and third level, through questionnaires and focus groups at MIC, ATU and MU (see Appendix 2 for details on the questionnaires and focus group questions). Final analysis of findings will be undertaken from Feb-April 2023. Work on disseminating the research in international journals of education, practitioner journals for teachers and at EDI related conferences and events from May 2023 onwards. The research outputs will inform practitioners and policy makers of the current situations within ITE i.e., educators and students' knowledge and understanding around gender and gender equality and their experiences of integrating gender equality into their teaching, learning and research, with recommendations on embedding gender equality into ITE as set out by the Gender Equality Taskforce¹. The research is also highlighting the needs of educators in HEIs and graduates in the in examining the gender dimension in their curricula².

A report on embedding gender equality in ITE and educational outreach settings will be produced once all seminars are complete and data has been collected. We had originally planned a suite of case study resources as a result of the seminars, these examples will now be embedded within the report.

Four Workshops/Seminars on Gender in ITE open to all teacher educators and those in educational outreach across Ireland.

Details of all events organised to date and upcoming events are included in Appendix 3.

A video outlining the impact of the project on the project partners will be recorded during the final seminar in March 2023.

Appendix 1

Phase one of the project will involve exploratory research, gathering data from pre-service teachers, and teacher educators across all levels in education i.e., early childhood, primary, second level and third level, to gain an understanding of their knowledge and understanding around gender equality and their experiences of integrating the gender dimension into their teaching. The research will ensure that the students and teacher educator voice is at the forefront, creating baseline information in the situation currently in ITE and thus highlighting what needs to be carried out in ITE to **embed gender equality within organisational culture**. The data gathered during this phase will then be used to inform the design and development of phase two of the project.

¹ <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/11/Gender-Equality-Taskforce-Action-Plan-2018-2020.pdf>

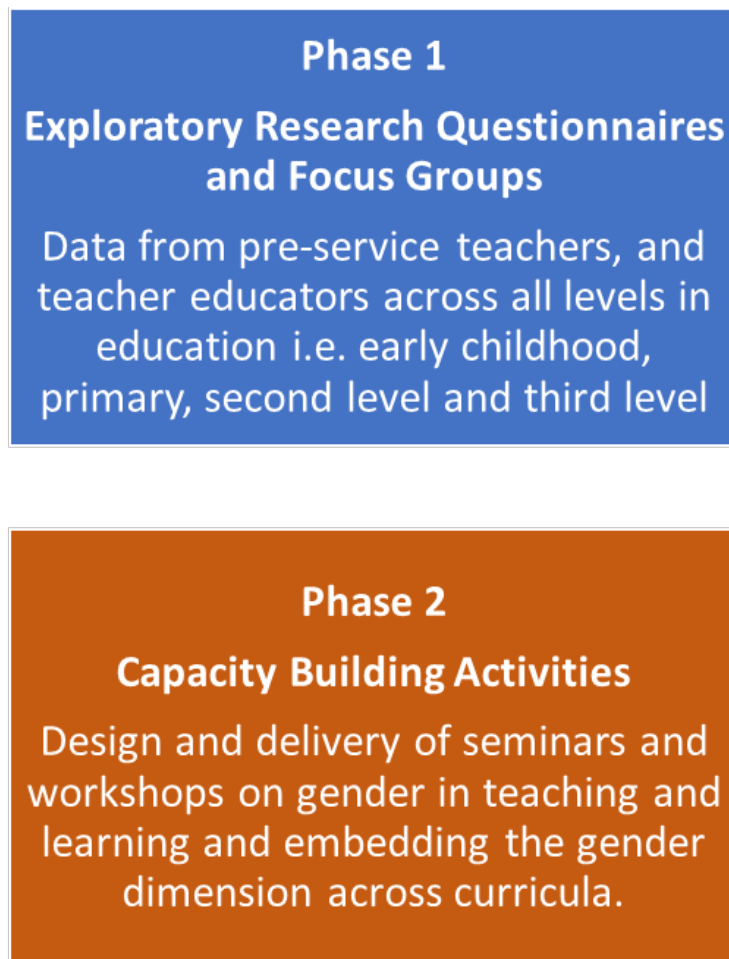


Figure 1. Phases of the ‘Integrating the gender dimension into teaching, learning and educational outreach in initial teacher education’ project.

Phase two will involve developing an awareness around embedding gender equality across teaching and learning in both formal and informal education settings, through a variety of capacity building activities for academics in teacher education and those who deliver educational outreach in schools. The project will include the design and development of an educational programme on incorporating **gender equality across curricula. The programme will** involve online seminars and workshops exploring gender across curricula with the project partners and will be open to other HEI’s in ITE and organisations involved in the delivery of educational outreach in schools.

The seminars and workshops will involve presentations from international experts in the field, delivering sessions on gender in teaching and learning and embedding gender equality across curricula. These workshops will be open to all teacher educators and those in educational outreach across Ireland. The interactive session will also accommodate reflection and knowledge sharing activities whereby educators share ideas and experiences and good practices through open discussion and dialogue.

Appendix 2

Teacher Educator Questionnaire

1. Where do you work: (please tick the box)

- Mary Immaculate College
- Maynooth University
- Atlantic Technological University, Sligo

2. What is your gender:

- Male,
- Female,
- Non-Binary
- Transgender
- Prefer not to say

3. What career stage are you at in your career

- 0-3 years,
- 4-10 years,
- > 10 years

4. What cohort of students do you work with:

- Early childhood education
- Primary level education
- Second level education

5. Do you think it is necessary to address gender in your subject area and teaching on your education programme?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

5a. Please explain your answer.

6. Do you take gender into account in the planning and design of your own teaching?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

6a. Could you share an example of how you do this?

7. Is gender a topic you cover in your lectures with your students?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

7a. If yes, how?

8. Have you experienced any barriers or challenges to addressing gender in your teaching?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

8a. If yes, could you list and describe the barriers or challenges.

9. How confident do you feel in integrating gender in your teaching?

- Very Confident
- Confident
- Not Very Confident

- Not at all confident

9a. What has contributed to your level of confidence in this area?

10. Have you received formal training or CPD in this area?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

10a. If yes, can you briefly explain what type of training you received?

11. What supports do you need to integrate gender in your teaching?

- CPD
- Conferences on the themes
- Networking
- Case studies
- Teaching and learning guidelines
- Communities of practice within a dept or faculty
- Other

11a. If other explain here:

Teacher Educator Focus Group

1. What is your understanding of gender? How would you explain it?
2. What is your understanding of gender equality? How would you explain it?
3. Is gender equality considered in your subject discipline?
4. Do **you** address gender equality in your teaching?
 - If yes, how do approach this (maybe by giving a brief example)?
 - If not, can you share some reasons for this?
5. What are the barriers to addressing gender equality in your teaching?
6. How important or unimportant do you think addressing gender equality in (primary/early years) education is? Why?
7. Have you received formal training, induction, or CPD in this area of addressing gender and/or gender equality in teaching and learning?
8. What supports do you need to address or further address gender and gender equality in your teaching?

Student Focus group

1. What is your understanding of gender? How would you explain it?
2. What is your understanding of gender equality? How would you explain it?
3. Does your course content address gender and gender equality?
4. If yes, how is this approached in your classes and/or during your independent learning?
5. Do you think it is important to address gender and/or gender equality during your education degree? why?

6. How equipped do you feel in addressing gender and gender equality into your own teaching? Could you talk more on this?
7. Do you have any suggestions in how your degree programme might address gender and gender equality? *(Take time exploring this with the students during the focus group) **

*Ring fence time for question 7.

Appendix 3

Seminar 1: “Integrating the Gender Dimension into Teaching & Learning”

In attendance: 25

Students and lecturers from MIC, MU and IT Sligo speaking on their experiences and sharing practices on integrating the gender dimension into teaching and learning.

Speaker 1: Carole Quigley, Faculty of Arts, MIC

Speaker 2: Rebecca Curtin, primary school teacher and student of Master of Education in Literacy Education, MIC

Speaker 3: Eddie Costello, Froebel Dept of Primary and Early Childhood Education, MU

Speaker 4: TBC

Speaker 5: Jacqueline O’Toole, Dept of Social Science, IT Sligo

Speaker 6: Andrew Galvin, recent graduate of IT Sligo

Seminar 2: “Integrating the gender dimension into teaching, learning and educational outreach in initial teacher education”

Date: Monday the 13th of June 2022, 10am-11am.

In attendance: 37

This launch event will involve two presentations from: **Professor Emerita Raewyn Connell, University of Sydney** on *Gender Knowledge for Teacher Education* and **Dr Declan Fahie, Director of School Placement, University College Dublin**: *Gender Equalities In Initial Teacher Education: Knowledge, Empathy and Praxis*, with Q&A session afterwards.

Schedule

Introduction: Dr. Maeve Liston, Director of Enterprise and Community Engagement, Mary Immaculate College.

Launch of project: Professor Lorraine McIlrath | Director of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) and Interculturalism, Mary Immaculate College.

Presentation: Professor Emerita Raewyn Connell, University of Sydney: *Gender Knowledge for Teacher Education*.

Q&A lead by Dr. Suzanne O Keefe, Associate Professor, Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, Maynooth University.

Presentation: Dr Declan Fahie, *Director of School Placement*, University College Dublin: *Gender Equalities In Initial Teacher Education: Knowledge, Empathy and Praxis*.

Q&A lead by Dr. Máire Hanniffy, Lecturer, Dept. of Social Science, Atlantic Technological University Sligo.

Closing Comments: Dr. Niamh Fortune, Associate Professor, Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education, Maynooth University.

Next steps for the “Integrating the gender dimension into teaching, learning and educational outreach in initial teacher education” project: Edel Foster, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager, Mary Immaculate College.

Upcoming Seminars in 2023

Seminar 3: “Addressing gender and gender equality in Early Childhood Education and Primary Education”

Themes:

- Challenge gender stereotypes and promoting gender inclusivity in teaching;
- Integrating gender equality across a curriculum;
- How gender influences teaching, the curriculum, and the lives of teachers and students in the classroom;

Date: 27th Feb 2023.

Seminar 4: “Learning from the ‘Integrating the gender dimension into teaching, learning and educational outreach in initial teacher education’ project”

Date: Monday 27th of March/Wednesday 29th March/Friday 31st March (TBC)

Themes

- Developing an awareness around embedding gender equality across teaching and learning in both formal and informal education settings;
- Supporting teachers across the continuum (teacher educators, ITE and professional development) and across levels in education (Early, Primary, Second and Third Level education) in developing curricula that incorporates gender awareness, equality and diversity.
- Challenging symbolic links between gender and discipline