

Modern Australian education system and its role fostering equality in education e...

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Introduction

Inequality in education is cruel and unjust it persists and cuts deep along individual and community memories. In many occasions, it is not an issue of the past, lingers not only in Australia but the entire parts of the world (Ramsay, 2001). Modern education standards are critical in fulfilling this gap and providing equal opportunity for all learners in life. Education plays a crucial role in modeling the learners from different backgrounds in order to create tomorrow's socially just society. The current generations of the learners are the society leaders of the future. Therefore, it is important for the Australian government and the education system to provide a learning vision and mission that foster equality among the learners for equal progressive development in the land (Luck, 2009).

The Australian national constitution has been in the forefront in fostering the equality in the society. The constitutional model aims to foster equal opportunities and treatment to the entire population irrespective of gender, race and culture. As a core component of the economic progress, education has always been marked in the Australian constitution. In the constitution, special education act such as learner equality has been marked with greater emphasis. The legislation has covered some important educational domains specifically about gender equality. Furthermore, Australian Educational Act aims to provide equal treatment to all learners and produce outstanding learners who may suite the global challenging situations (Stromquist, 2005).

Literature Review

Equality in Modern Australian Educational System purpose is a 20th century phenomenon. Before the time, education was observed as a vessel of preparing different groups for their life stations such as leaders, workers, and parents. The western progressive “feminist wave” has instigated varieties of movement, philosophies and theories to shape the progressive position of equal gender issue in education. Conventionally, the movement has carried out in three important stages. That is, the 20th, early 20th, and 21st wave, all with the purpose of providing access to women in political, social, and economic aspects of life. Later it expanded to a broader agenda of factors affecting women such as reproduction, labor, domestic violence and sexuality. This fight led to a number of gains not only to Australia but the entire globe (Wyn, 2000). In Australia, the notion of equality is not only determined in the education sector but also in the cultural realm. In Australia, the term policy-making on gender has been regarded as an important concept. It is acceptable to the greater populace due to its visionary motion (Luck, 2009).

Stromquist, 2005, in his study, supported the idea of gender equality. He said that equality concept addressed; Equal life chance, Equal cultivation of different abilities, open completion for the limited opportunities and interdependence of educational achievement from different social origins. According to Wood, viewing education as a tool of providing equal chances focuses on non-discriminatory practices. Today, the study of gender mainstreaming is highly emphasized in Australia modern education system and the European Union as a whole. The goals of achieving the gender

mainstreaming in education comprise of gender equality in enrolment and completion rates, addressing gender stereotypes in teacher education and school curriculum (Stromquist, 2005).

Gender Themes in the Modern Australian Education System That Foster Equality

In accordance to the understanding the idea of social development, Erick Erickson 1946-1956, a renowned psychologist postulated a theory of identity at the adolescent period. He said that an identity involves two important factors; a constant sameness within an individual and sharing with the others. The Australian school provides time and place for the junior learners in which they may expound on their different social roles. This opportunity acts a preliminary stage before they are permanently occupied in their intimate relationships, occupation, and political roles. Sociologist Theodore Newcomb's classic study supports Erick's assertion that both early and late adolescent stages are quite significant for an individual relation in development and social-political world. Theodore document that peer influence was quite crucial in shaping the Modern Australian curriculum (Luck, 2009).

The school learning materials that are used in most schools provide important indicators of the education system commitment in delivering gender equity. The language used in the learning materials within the Modern Australian System strives to address the equality challenge without stereotyping any gender role. Nonetheless, sometimes these materials in some circumstances deviate to relay men in a wider set of roles as opposed to the women. Nilson 1975, in her study, referred women as " the cult of

apron," this is due to the nature of apron dressing she found portrayed in the 55 award winning books. Moreover, the current Polish study also reveals that some of the books used in the Australian curriculum especially at higher educational levels are highly stereotypes as they ignore female figures and their achievements. Fortunately, relevant care has been made to care for the biased materials that are produced currently in Australia (Wyn, 2000).

Motivational and psychological factors have been considered as critical in the learner's performance by several theorists. In Australian modern education system, the concepts of motivational and emotional have been treated with greater interest. Most of the teachers and learning materials have provided environments that encourage the learners to equally take part in education. However study analysis indicates that at lower levels boys tend to have low academic moral as compared to girls. Child development theorist Piaget (1975/1985) emphasized that inequality and discrepancy among learners normally limits cognitive growth. Drawing on these theories, one of the renowned psychologists Diane Ruble 1994 provided an elaborate design indicating the importance of transition from one class to the other as an important opportunity to spur equality. The phases of the development marked important phases that offered cognitive growth. This model provides a special important to the first year that is marked in most of the Modern Australian schools. These models not only foster equality but also integrate learners from diverse regions and cultural backgrounds to experience genuine interaction (Stromquist, 2005).

The learner assessment procedures that are used in the Modern Australian Educational System are geared towards the provision of neutrality and to

eliminate any form of biases. This trend has been archived better with the relative emphasis on the achievement targets of individuals, countries and the cross national studies that have been conducted across with other nations. Unfortunately, studies indicate that favoritism treatment occurs in some circumstances where the sex of the learner is known. The positive aspect with case is that Australian major exams only provide an anonymous identity entry. In examination content, boys have outweighed the ladies across most of the exams while girls perform relatively better in essay and course works (Luck, 2009).

In Australia, co-education practice is one of the channels that steer biological integration between male and females. The modern education has greatly abolished stereotyping nature of education. Therefore, it has rejected the hierarchal structure that favors men dominance to women in the society. The co-education provides equal gender roles as prescribed for both sexes. Epstein et al 1988, in his study, revealed the mixed classroom learning usually do not favor girls' as boys receive more attention from the teacher than girls. The Australian Modern Education System to mainstream Co-education in their system aims to provide single-sex schooling that advocates for the progressiveness of the broad gender spectrum. The single-sex education has allowed the classroom teachers to employ some of the strategies that are suitable to reduce the gender gap. For instance, single sex class sessions allow the girls to participate in the education activities very freely. This method has enabled the Australian learners to achieve a higher level of academic improvement (Ramsay, 2001).

In conclusion, the Australian Modern Education System through its relevant

models has succeeded in achieving equality in most of the conditions. The legislation of the model has proved and given a better indication on its commitment in developing gender equality in education. It is important for the nation through its gender coordinators to continue implementing the gender mainstreaming programs. They should continue emphasizing on the coordination mechanisms between the educational strategies and the other global counterparts. This trend will foster the education aims of producing relevant individuals who are able to sustain a society in future.

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