

# Recensões

---

***Gender – Diversity – Intersectionality (New) Perspectives in Adult Education*, edited by Martina Endepohls-Ulpe and Joanna Ostrouch-Kamińska. Munster: Waxmann, 2019, 214 pp.**

Lidia Bieliniś,  
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Warmia and Mazury  
in Olsztyn, Poland

The book entitled *Gender–Diversity–Intersectionality (New) Perspectives in Adult Education* edited by Martina Endepohls-Ulpe and Joanna Ostrouch-Kamińska is a set of chapters presented as a wider discourse of socio-pedagogical matters analysed in the context of gender and adult education. It consists of four parts that represent different aspects of the field.

The first part of the book begins with a reflection *The ‘learned disadvantage’: Unraveling women’s explanations about their greater responsibilities in doing household chores in Portuguese heterosexual couples with children* presented by Cristina C. Vieira, Lina Coelho, and Silvia Portugal. The authors passed a remark on the crucial role that non-formal and formal education play in empowering boys and girls to be free of gender prejudices. After conducting interviews with Portuguese families, they noticed that economic recession affected reconciliation of family-work life principles and that women automatically started handling the unpaid household chores that were previously provided by commercial services. The issue of the fair distribution of family responsibilities is one of the greatest challenges of contemporary education. The authors sensibly noticed that mentalities do not change coincidentally with pieces of legislation, hence I hope this text will be recognised by educators (including academic ones) in order to enhance the dissemination of gender knowledge.

The second chapter in that part was prepared by Melanie Pohl and entitled *The impact of emotionalization in different text types on women and men in German (young) adults*. The text sought to analyse differences in the perception of emotions between women and men considering different text types and its scientific value should be emphasised due to the fact of great influence emotions have on both: men and women’s everyday life. However, I feel obliged to point out that author’s suggestion to deliver knowledge of methods used to elicit emotions through text materials at universities and other adult learning institutions seems to be far too late. I would suggest that it should definitely go together with school education as media coverage is a concern of children and adolescents, not only young adults.

Then, there is the chapter written by Monika Grochalska entitled *Social representations of intimate relationships in female narratives as the effect of social learning* that sought to reconstruct the experiences of women from the viewpoint of their practical discourses and the discourses co-occurring in the public sphere. As a

result of data analysis, she distinguished five dichotomous dimensions of intimate representations that resounded in the discursive practice of women. The text is overwhelmingly relevant for adults interested in sociology of education, psychology, social work, and pedagogy. It puts a new complexion on the view of intimacy and should be considered as a part of universities curricula. It is also remarkably significant to continue research analysis and explore men perspective of intimate relationships due to the fact of social expectations of them to be tough, non-emotional, and also to be principal earner.

Contrarily, Joanna Ostrouch-Kamińska's chapter entitled *Male project of self-destruction and adult learning of authenticity. Challenge for contemporary men* sheds light on risks related to male gender roles and stereotypes. The author found strong arguments supporting the thesis that the Western culture promotes a male-dominant vision of the world, in which men behaviours that are not attributed as masculine-connoted may stimulate exclusions in the peer group of a boy, and lead to self-destruction. Formal education supports these stereotypes and inhibits the processes of men emancipation. Thus, as the author noticed, the role in changing the current picture is reserved for the informal education. Not without a reason it is said that the only neglected group currently are young, healthy men. The rest of the society is in attendance of non-formal educational institutions. Men are also the victims of domestic violence and emotional abuse, which seems to be a noteworthy topic of further men's studies.

The second part of the book begins with the paper written by Marialisa Rizzo entitled *Feminine educational paths in three generations with Apulian origin in Milan*. The author observed that informal educational experiences of feminine interlocutors provide them the paths of their lives to follow and develop their identities in terms of maintaining traditional patterns of behaviour that were given to them as a consequence of a place their ancestry were born in. The author was interested in understanding the intergenerational differences and experiences of women who have a migration background. I assume she will also be concerned with analysis of Tonino Cantelmi who introduced a typology of generations. According to him, inhabitants of Western countries may be divided into: Baby Boomers, X, Y, and Z Generations. The first three of them may correspond with interviewed grandmothers, mothers, and daughters.

The second chapter here is *The gender dimension in assessing migrant women's non-formal and informal learning and skills* written by Rita Bencivenga. The text sought to gain better understanding about the training background and personal beliefs of volunteers assessing the migrant women's learning and skills, and the presence of biases in their approach. According to collected data, the volunteers seemed to try satisfying, primarily, the needs related to finding the employment, gender or origin issues, then, were excluded or not visible to anyone. Moreover, the author found out the lack of collaboration between organisations that might have supported the process of cultural assimilation. I believe that the current pic-

ture may be explained as a result of national politics climate, which is a crucial factor in developing policies for migrants.

The objective of the study of Claudia M. Quaiser-Pohl, Mirko Saunders, Josephine N. Arasa, Priscilla W. Kariuki, and Michaela Heinecke-Mueller, *The role of gender and culture for the development of human resources in Kenya* was to report results of a pilot research of a cross-cultural project based on testing the cultural equivalence of two Scales: Five-Factor Model of Personality as well as indigenous concept of personality (SAPI-Project). The research team was interested in measuring gender roles and identities, and the work-life balance among Kenyan and German citizens. The chapter included a comprehensive introduction to the topic of Kenyan culture and internal differences as well as references to some statistical data related to gender and division of responsibilities undertaken by men and women there. Overall, at this stage researchers argued that SAPI scale seemed to fit the personality structure of both cultures. The article is an example of well-conducted psychological research, having regard to both: cross-culture and gender analysis.

In the chapter entitled *Gender-related occupational stereotypes, job-related goals, interests and educational and family preconditions of young women and men in apprenticeships in a technological field*, Martina Endepohls-Ulpe and Victor Garnier were interested in young women's motivation to choose an apprenticeship in a traditional male-stereotyped professions. The findings clearly indicated that, unlike their male peers, the female participants were not conformed to established gender stereotypes. Results also showed that women's male relatives influenced them greatly in choosing their interests in STEM. Nevertheless, the authors highlighted risks that come from social expectations about women's interests and job-related choices that are generally in opposition to their self-concept, which is a good remark in regard to enhancing their passion and goals.

In the next chapter entitled *Canada's Indian Residential Schools, intersectionality, and decolonizing adult education* Cindy Hanson presented a deeper understanding of the intergenerational impact of Indian Residential Schools as well as of the official nonindigenous efforts to compensate acts of abuse experienced by Indigenous population. The author focused on how Independent Assessment Process model works from the gender perspective. This paper is an exemplification of an unmissable reading and allows recognising the problem of colonialism process in Canada as well as reflecting on gender issues, which seemed to be omitted in the IAP model. Moreover, employing a critical approach to intersectionality allowed the author to reveal oppressions affected by socio-political systems against people who, at a starting point, were on the unprivileged position.

In their chapter entitled *Improving the socio-economic integration of Roma women through adult education*, Mariya Ivanova and Aneta Dimitrova provided results of the analysis of educational status of Roma women in Bulgaria. Despite ample legal regulations aimed at protecting women's rights in Bulgaria as well as pro-

grams strengthening the potential of Roma families and their education, the problem of integrating Roma women into the Bulgarian society has not been resolved. I assumed that further research analysis might be helpful in understanding the described state of things. It is due to the fact the authors do not employ a normalised nomenclature concerning research methods used, and once they declare conducting 'direct personal interviews' while in the following they refer to the same procedure as 'in-depth interviews'. Hence, I would suggest to reflect on the methodological aspects of research and continue explorations that seems to be remarkably interesting.

The third part of the book consists of two chapters. The first one was prepared by Elisabeth Hofmann and Rachel Besson whose text was entitled *Complexing gender in a context of multiple layer hierarchies. A case study from training French nursery professionals on gender*. The authors reported reflections revealed during the process of conducting gender training for nursery professionals. The relevantly chosen action research methodology aimed to improve personal and institutional efficiency. Also the provided theoretical framework (transformative learning) introduced by J. Mezirow, in which one of the core notions is the disorienting dilemma, was accurately chosen for adult learning considerations. I believe, workshops provided by the authors could deliver totally new information for participants, and activate disorienting dilemma. As the authors stated, at first gender inequalities were treated by participants as an irrelevant issue. The study enabled to see not only gender inequalities but also other forms of domination that, unfortunately, intersected with gender issues.

The second chapter here written by Susanne Kreitz-Sandberg is entitled *Gender inclusion 2.0: Working with norm-critical perspectives for adult educators*. The paper sought to understand how gender inclusion could be a part of teachers training for educators. The author presented a complete description of Nordic folk-high-schools and teacher education programme there. The educational ethnography enabled her to collect triangulated data derived from: observations, document analysis, and interviews with directors of studies. The findings showed that questions related to gender and equity in the teacher education programme were built around four topics. Naturally, it would be also interesting to report adult students perspective who, indeed, are the receivers of courses syllabi content, however, the author mentioned this issue as a limitation of a study thereby assuring the reader that further investigations will be done in the future.

Then, there is the fourth part of the book and it begins with the chapter written by Alexis K. Johnson under the heading *Co-curation, re-framing cultural spaces from an outsider lens*. The author aimed to take a closer look on curated narratives within museum settings. The co-curation process with homeless young people ('outsiders') brought into the focus the probable missing stories of gender and diversity that were not considered as important to be told. This text is a wonderful exemplification of how social, human and art spheres intertwine to unleash

stories that were silent so far. The co-creation of museum spaces reminds the Theatre of the Oppressed, in the process of which the audience members can take over the performance and play it in their own way. The collective actions (in both approaches) may allow accomplishing a change that was unreachable so far.

Darlene E. Clover and Kathy Sanford wrote the second chapter, entitled *The feminist museum hack: A cultural pedagogy of seeing the unseen*. The authors pointed out museum practices content are not neutral. Their objective was to unearth the unseen packaged practices of transferring patriarchal content in museums. To achieve this, they employed an intentional practice called by them The Feminist Museum Hack. Their aim was to draw attention under issues like: sexism, classism, colonialism, and racism. The text is a very good exemplification of a well-developed strategy for adult education. Employment of the Hack tool may also support the process of linking art to formal learning of social science university students.

Gender is an issue having a strong impact on the educational system, and in particular on the formal, non-formal, and informal adult education. Hence, reflecting on it with different factors, such as: class, religion, origins, socio-economic status, and other diversity issues broadens the perspective in the field. The international insight given by the authors in the book allowed reconsidering these issues in regard to dynamically changeable societal developments.