Integration of gender into core course of teacher education in public Universities in Uganda

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Introduction

- Uganda is committed to achievement of gender equity and equality
  - Government efforts- gender policy put in place (1997); UPE, National Strategy for Girls’ education

Introduction cont.

- Changes seemed not to have influenced teacher education institutions
- Teachers like others in society, do not come into the classroom as gender neutral personalities
- Yet teachers are important in
  - implementing education reform,
  - define what/how should be taught,
  - standard of evaluation

Introduction cont.

- To what extent do teacher education institutions integrate gender into the core courses
  - Staff and students understanding of gender and its integration into teacher education course
  - Existence of gender specific topics in the course outlines
  - Integration into the courses
  - Challenges of integration

methodology

- 4 public universities (Gulu, Kyambogo, Mbarara and Makerere)
- 80 third year students (20 each)
- 25 teaching staff
- Interviews
- FGD
- Document analysis

Findings

- Understanding of gender
  - Staff: 44% - social construct, 56 – biological
  - Students: 28% social construct, 72% biological
Understanding of gender

- Some examples
  - “it’s a mixture of both males and females in all aspects”
  - “It is male and female involvement in society”
  - “Tendency to balance and incorporate the 2 sexes”
- Since staff decide on the content lack of understanding reduces their ability to include and integrate gender

Importance of acquainting trainees with gender issues

- All respondents (students and staff) agree that it important that teacher trainees have some knowledge of gender issues
- Some staff reported that it is better to have a course instead of integrating
  - Difficult to be sure whether one is integrating
  - Integration implies it is not important (Invisible)

Integration vs full course

- Those who prefer integration considered the heavy schedules students have
- Full course would only succeed if its compulsory

Findings 2 – existence of gender specific topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>universities</th>
<th>core course</th>
<th>Gender topics</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GU</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUST</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MU</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Challenges to integration

- Knowledge of how to integrate
- Lack of time
- Large class size
- Attitude of the students

integration

- Many topics where gender could be integrated
  - Few integrate – mainly by giving examples “I always talk about gender, encourage female to aspire for leadership roles”
  - 78% do not integrate but claim to treat females and males equally
conclusion

- Teacher training institution have not yet done much to integrate gender into the curriculum. An indication that the teacher trainees being passed out are not gender sensitive.
- There is need to sensitize teacher educators