Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Equality and Diversity
Volume xx, Issue xx. YEAR.

Title: 'School related Gender based violence in England (SRGBV): An intersectional analysis'

Maria Tsouroufli, Professor of Education, Department of Education Brunel University

T +44 (0)1895 266637 | E maria.tsouroufli@brunel.ac.uk

Brunel University London

College of Business, Arts & Social Sciences

Department of Education GASK058

Brunel University London, Uxbridge, UB8 3PH, United Kingdom

Abstract

Despite increasing attention to SRGBV, little consideration has been given to the multiple identities of teachers and students and their role in perceptions and performances of SRGBV. This paper explores the intersections of gender with constructs of ethnicity, culture, religion and sexuality norms and enactments of SRGBV in three secondary schools in England. It draws on qualitative interview data collected for the project 'Developing Gender Equality Charter Marks in order to overcome gender stereotyping in education across Europe'.

The intersectionality of gender with sexual norms emerged in essentialist views about female academic and professional competence and normative expectations of sexual conduct, sustaining a culture of gender disrespect and a gender regime in which SRGBV was the penalty of transgressions of gender and sexual norms and the means to reiterate male privilege in two schools.

Submitted on 22/01/2019
Accepted on 21/06/2019
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The intersectionality of gender with culture, ethnicity and religion emerged in one of the three schools in teachers' discourses of ethnic deficit associated with perceived lack of ability, freedom, and choice in ethnic minority girls' lives and inappropriate expressions of sexuality that diverted from white British norms.

Further research is required to enhance knowledge about the performances of SRGBV alongside other axes of power and discrimination.

Keywords: Gender, Intersectionality, School related Gender based Violence (SRGBV), Secondary Schools, England

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Accepted on 21/06/2019
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Introduction

School related gender-based violence in the 21st century

This paper contributes to research on violence in Europe by addressing the gender dimensions of violence in schools in England. It focuses on instances of verbal, physical and psychological violence and explicitly addresses the intersections with gender, sexual and other identities (race, religion) in conceptualizations and enactments of gender violence in England. School related gender based violence (SRGBV) is a global issue with no boundaries in terms of culture, ethnicity, religion, able-bodiedness, sexuality, and geographical location.

Recently gender-based violence in schools has come to international attention, partly due to its recognition as a barrier to achieving the fifth Education for All goal: 'to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality' (Dakar Framework for Action, 2000)..

In 2000, SRGBV received very little attention in government policies and plans around the world, largely due to the lack of connections between women's rights movements and organizations working for children's rights, including Education for all movement (EFA). Although the creation of safe learning environments for girls was referred to in the Dakar Framework for Action (p.17), the main concerns of the EFA movement in 2000 were increasing access to school and gender parity (George, 2005). The Dakar Framework is a collective commitment to action. Governments from across the world pledged to achieve EFA, had an obligation to reach EFA targets and goals by 2015.

Another obstacle in raising awareness of SRGBV around 2000 was the lack of research and also the way violence was defined. The dominant approach to understanding

Submitted on 22/01/2019
Accepted on 21/06/2019
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violence was problematic as it reduced the concept to acts of aggression between individuals, and masking violence as a gender neutral concept. In this paper SRGBV is defined as 'acts of sexual, physical or psychological violence occurring in and around schools because of gender norms and stereotypes, and enforced by unequal power dynamics because of their sex or gendered identity. The term also refers to the differences between girls' and boys' experience of and vulnerabilities to violence' (Unesco, 2019). Its manifestations include but are not limited to bullying, including verbal and/or physical harassment; Sexual harassment; Sexual acts in exchange for good grades or for the paying of school fees; Non-consensual touching or sexual assault; Seduction or sexual harassment of learners by a teacher; and tolerance (or encouragement) of male dominance or aggression within the school environment. In addition to explicit violence Leach (2006) refers to implicit forms including everyday institutional structures and practices that reinforce gender discrimination, like gender differentiated punishments. These practices reinforce unequal gender relations and may increase the likelihood of explicit acts of gender violence.

SRGBV reflects entrenched gender norms and stereotypes and although widespread, it remains grossly under-researched and under-reported. Very little research in Europe has explicitly addressed the gender dimensions of violence in schools, and bullying for example is often discussed in gender and race neutral terms (Ringrose and Renold, 2010).

Forms and prevalence of SRGBV vary across the world. In the United States and Western Europe, bullying and dating violence, cyber-bullying, homophobic violence, and school shootings have been reported as common (UNGEI, 2013). In their analysis of research evidence about violence in schools around the world, Dunne et al. (2003) found that much work ignored gender; work in Latin America was concerned with gangs, guns and drugs; in Asia with corporal punishment; and in Europe and North America, with bullying by

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Accepted on 21/06/2019
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pupils, usually seen in gender-neutral terms. Only in Africa there was a clearly gendered lens, with increasing attention drawn to the high prevalence of sexual violence. Dunne et al.'s (2003) research review highlighted the intersections of gender, age, poverty, ethnicity and sexuality in enactments of sexual violence. A few recent pieces of research in the Global South have addressed forms of violence still surrounded by taboos, including homophobic bullying (Dunne, 2007) and sexual violence of children with disabilities (UNICEF, 2005), but the particularly high levels of violence experienced by some of the most marginalised and discriminated against groups of children need much more attention in research and policy.

In what follows I discuss how intersections of gender with other strands of diversity have been addressed in educational research about SRGBV in the UK.

Intersectionality and educational research in the UK

Intersecting inequalities/identities have received considerable attention in relation to attainment in education in the UK (Archer and Frances, 2006; Reay, 2008) and particularly in STEM subjects (Archer et al, 2017). However, little attention has been given to intersecting identities of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and class in relation to SRGBV in the UK. Research on sexuality within education has pointed out the difficulties, discriminations—and even dangers—faced by young lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils as they make their way through school classrooms, play grounds and exam rooms (Epstein, 1994; Mac an Ghaill, 1994). Taylor's study in the UK illustrated young girls' experiences of othering, (Tsouroufli, 2012) which in some cases resulted at drop outs from school at a young age, and noted the dual force of class and sexuality in their recollections of marginalization (Taylor, 2005; 2006). The interrelation between class and sexuality has been illustrated by other research accounts, including Skegg's famous work (1997), who suggests that working class women have to develop strategies to deal with being

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Accepted on 21/06/2019
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positioned as sexual and the innuendos which follow from this. Bhopal has conducted research on exploring discourses of identity and intersectionality in the lives of Black ethnic minority groups (Chapman and Bhopal, 2018) and more recently on the experiences of ethnic minority academics (2016). Bhopal's work challenges the notion of a post-racial society and brings to the fore how racism, exclusion and marginalization operate in predominantly white spaces (Bhopal, 2018).

Discussion of intersectional relationships between gender, class privilege, whiteness and the production of contemporary 'laddish' behaviours (Phipps, 2016) seem to be absent in outrage around 'lad culture' and 'rape culture' and the ways in which problematic forms of masculinity are framed and legitimized by the structures and rationalities of the neoliberal university, school and workplace (Phipps and Young, 2015). The failure of the notion of 'rape culture' to attend to intersectionality and difference was highlighted recently in the controversy over the video for US singer/songwriter Rihanna's track 'Bitch Better Have My Money', which was accused by some feminists of perpetuating 'rape culture' because of its depiction of Rihanna perpetrating sexualized violence on a white woman (Phillips et al. 2017).

Conceptual/Theoretical Frameworks

The work presented here is informed by an emic perspective to intersectionality (Tatli and Ozbligin, 2012) that identifies and explores intersections emergent in the field and situated in a specific time and place. It is also informed by a feminist position that considers patriarchy and sexism alongside racist politics (Crenshaw, 1989). Drawing on what Collins (2000) calls the 'matrix of domination' and Yuval-Davis's (2006) notion of social divisions as intermeshing, I explore in this paper the emergent intersections of gender, ethnicity/culture, religion and sexuality and their role in shaping and being shaped by different gender and gender based violence school regimes in England.

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Accepted on 21/06/2019
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I also draw on Connell's notion of gender regime to demonstrate how gender and other identities and inequalities shape and are shaped by institutional systems of discrimination and marginalization. The qualitative baseline data from England discussed in this paper illustrates the school processes and beliefs that distribute women/girls and men/boys into different tasks and positions and constitute a regime of gender inequality and gender based violence (Connell, 1987). It considers the variations of gender school cultures and formations of regimes of SRGBV across schools, as well as their affirmation and sustainability through teachers' and students' stereotypes about ethnic groups, cultures, religions and gender norms about male privilege, female sexuality, respectability, and legitimacy (Tsouroufli, 2018). The qualitative baseline data from Hungary and Italy are discussed in separate papers in the special issue of Interdisciplinary Perspectives to Equality and Diversity (IPED) 'Intersectional Aspects of Schools Related Gender-Based Violence in Europe'.

This paper reports on data from a Horizon 2020 Action grant to support transnational projects to promote good practices on gender roles and to overcome gender stereotypes in education, training and in the workplace RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP/JUSTICE PROGRAMME (2014-2020). Horizon 2020 is the financial means for implementing Europe's initiative aimed at securing global competitiveness. The project adopted a whole school approach in changing gender cultures and promoting gender equality in secondary schools in England, Hungary and Italy through the development, implementation and evaluation of a Gender Equality Charter mark (GECM). Research shows that a whole-school approach helps to ensure momentum and sustain change, and that schools find this approach useful where issues are complex and need to be supported by the entire school community (Henderson and Tilbury, 2004).

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Methods

The project 'Developing Gender Equality Charter Marks in order to overcome Gender Stereotyping in Education' (UST/2015/RGEN/AG/ROLE) aimed to problematize the ways in which gender equality is framed in schools across Europe and to promote a gender inclusive culture and gender certification system sensitive to the intersections of gender with other identities and inequalities. This paper focuses on data from schools in England. A full project report about the work in all the collaborating countries will be available after June 2019 on the leading partner's website Development Education South Yorkshire (DECSY). A book contract has also been agreed with Palgrave Gender and Education series for publication in 2020.

The project was awarded in 2016 and was completed in June 2019. It involved:

- Recruitment of pilot schools and development of a Gender Equality Charter Mark (GECM) in consultation with teachers and experts from January-September 2017
- Compilation of international literature review on SRGBV and country specific reviews of relevant work in schools (February/March 2017)
- Qualitative baseline data collection and analysis from October 2017 to April 2018
- Consultations with teacher representatives and researchers aiming to offering support in addressing areas of concerns and implementing the GECM throughout the duration of the project
- Evaluation of GECM implementation activities and identification of areas for future work from March to June 2019.

In what follows I discuss the methods employed for the collection of baseline data this paper draws on, the schools that participated in the implementation and evaluation of the

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GECM in England. The aim of this phase of the project was to collect evidence about gender stereotypes, inequalities, SRGBV and regimes across schools to inform GECM implementation activities and evaluation.

This paper draws on qualitative baseline data analysis of one to one semi-structured interviews with a diverse sample of 24 members of staff (mainly teachers but also some support and administrative staff) and 4 focus group interviews (2 in school 3) with year 9 to 11 students in 3 secondary schools in England. One to one interviews and focus groups allowed for in depth discussion of sensitive issues with teachers and students within the tight schedule of the research project. However, discussion of difficult issues, particularly school related gender based violence, was challenging and sparked emotions of disappointment and helplessness. Following the completion of the first phase of the project the researcher worked closely with the leading partner and the project co-ordinators to address some of these difficult issues with schools, raise awareness about SRGBV and improve the process of reporting gender based violence incidents.

Teachers in every school were selected by the project co-ordinator/contact and came from different subject areas, age, experience, gender, and cultural/ethnic background. The young participants were selected in school 1 by the project co-ordinator in consultation with the year leads and in schools 2 and 3 by the project co-ordinator. As with the teacher participants an attempt was made to achieve diversity in terms of gender and culture/ethnicity when possible. The size of the focus groups varied slightly in each school and the maximum number of students (11) were achieved in school 1. The limitation of this sampling approach was that project co-ordinators preferred students that they felt had interesting ideas to share and/or they were more forthcoming with information.

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Prior to my visit to the schools consent forms were signed by teachers, students and their parents and information for research participants (project focus, recruitment, data storage and dissemination, confidentiality and anonymity, safeguarding issues, role of researcher, professional code of conduct) were circulated. All interviews took place in a quiet room in the school and participants were able to ask questions and clarification about the project and the role of the researcher. Interviews were audio-recorded and lasted maximum one hour. The study was granted ethical approval by relevant bodies in each of the collaborating countries.

DECSY Sheffield, the leading partner for the project was responsible for the recruitment process for teacher group and pilot schools. A similar process was followed in every partner country where an NGO worked closely with a University in developing, adapting, implementing and evaluating the GECM. In England publicity was sent out to national (Sex Education Forum, Stonewall Education Champions E- Bulletin, DECs Consortium Website, Gender Respect Twitter) and local groups (Learn Sheffield Commission, presentation at (name) School SLT, individual contacts from Gender Respect Project) and DECSY work. 6 applications received from diverse group of teachers with different subject and management responsibilities so were all accepted to be involved in the development and implementation of the GECM. 6 applications were received from schools and considered in relation to level of commitment, diversity of schools and levels of experience and 3 were chosen for the implementation of the GECM. All three schools had safeguarding policies but nothing specific about school related gender based violence.

The interview schedule for young people was based on the themes of the charter mark: leadership, curriculum, out of school/extra-curricular activities, physical environment, attitudes and relationships, community with many prompts, questions and 2 photographs for discussion. Intersectional issues run throughout all areas. The interviews with staff

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were more open with prompts used only when they were considered absolutely necessary.

The first step of the thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) for this paper was descriptive and entailed organization of the data under first order themes and sub-themes, mainly leadership (staffing and staff development), curriculum (mainly subject choice and performance, achievement differences and career education), attitudes and relationships (language, peer socialization and gender based violence). Reading and re-reading of coded text, reporting patterns within data, and reading of relevant literature on gender, SRGBV and intersectionality led to the conceptualization of higher order themes: ethnic deficit; othering of ethnic minorities; homogenization of Islam; teaching as whiteness; female illegitimacy; female respectability; pathologization of women and girls; sexualization and objectification of women and girls; policing of staff and young people's sexuality; and trivialization and normalization of SRGBV.

The analysis presented in this paper is informed by an emic approach to intersectionality (Tatli and Ozbilgin, 2012). The study was not designed to focus on pre-established notions of any strands of diversity and their role in gender equality and SRGBV. Intersectional relations of gender, ethnicity, culture and religion emerged as essential in teachers' perceptions of gender equality and GBV mainly in the first school; intersectional relations of gender, and sexuality in the interviews with staff and students in the second and third school. All three schools attracted an ethnically diverse student population but were located in different geographical locations of England. The majority of the teachers though were white and this was also reflected in the research sample.

Results

Intersections of gender stereotypes with ethnicity, culture, religion, and SRGBV

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Teachers' narratives of gender equality and GBV in the first school focused mainly on gendered divisions of labour in the homes of ethnic minority children and in the classroom/school resulting from patriarchal norms and structures as the following extracts illustrate:

'We are still fighting a battle about gender stereotypes and subjects. I used to work in a white-working class school there was split but it was not that prevalent like all the boys. Here Pakistani boys would say why would I have to do food and technology? I want to do the boys' subjects. We have the same issue with Slovak students, they say I will not clean up that's a girl's job.' (White, male teacher)

Gender divisions of labour were not presented as a concern for white British boys and families, perceived by teachers in the first schools as more progressive and gender equal.

'Surely we have that with white boys. It seems there is a shift since the 70s. Everybody in my world shares responsibilities, the children of my peer group do that as well. If you go into your average Pakistani home women would do cleaning and do the cooking and men would do something else' (White male teacher)

'Pakistani and Somali very male dominated society and lots of students bring that from home. The male is the more dominant in the family especially in the most recent arrivals from Saudi, Somalia. Also Roman Slovak very male dominated, it would be the man who works'. (White male teacher)

Teachers in the first school discussed in length the gender stereotypical expectations in Muslim families particularly in relation to girls' school participation and career choices. Interestingly, Islam was discussed as homogenous and the culture of ethnic minority groups as static and distinctively different to white British norms despite the fact that many of the children in the school were actually British (born and bred in the UK). However,

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they were never referred to as British or British Pakistani, and their ethnic origin and religious identity were constructed by teachers as problematic in relation to gender equality. When prompted by the researcher (Greek-British, Christian, feminist academic) to reflect on these issues and discuss in more detail, teachers demonstrated very little, if any, knowledge and understanding of the communities and faith they were so critical about and committed to 'fix' and 'correct' through citizenship teaching, talking to parents, and other initiatives organized by the school.

'As you have probably noticed we have a lot of Muslim students. We have a bit more work to do in breaking down stereotypes, issues about how girls spend their free time, who they are allowed to marry. We have to challenge these things sensitively. A lot of girls were not allowed to do after school practices. A lot these issues have to do with culture and religion and we do a lot of work in raising participation. We challenge these ideas. In the Muslim culture there are a lot of gender issues because of religious observations, cultural norms and expectations outside the school influence.' (White female teacher)

'Gender, well really it is a religious culture issue very different to the Western world' (white male teacher)

We spoke to some older Asian students … and then organized visits to manufacturers to advance uptake at GCSE level Asian female students design and technology but when it came to actually making those changes they did not make the decisions we had anticipated probably for political and family reasons. Those girls would not choose design and technology.' (White male teacher)

'We have young people from countries like Yemen and of Islamic faith where there is gender bias. (White male teacher)

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Teachers' gender stereotypes had received some attention but certainly not enough and the school had no gender equality policy or a coherent policy against SRGBV. In the following quote a teacher mentions the difficulties that a male teacher had in his interactions with bright female students. He also mentions the difficulties that the school has had in understanding difference and dealing effectively with student diversity.

'We had an issue with a male teacher who found it difficult to be challenged by bright girls. The girls complained to the head of year and the male teacher was spoken to. We also had another issue. Some Asian Pakistani girls were constructed as having a communication issue or speech problem. Then we did some work with them and we realised that they are just shy or not confident' (White male teacher)

Ethnic deficit (Van Doodeward and Knopperds, 2018) was not only associated with perceived lack of ability, freedom and choice in ethnic minority girls' and women's lives but also with perceived inappropriate sexual conduct and expressions of sexuality that diverted from white British norms. For example, Roman Slovak boys and girls were constructed as sexually aggressive and sexually incontinent, whereas Muslim students were seen as sexually reserved and not expressing their sexuality.

'Roman Slovak boys are particularly sexualised, very physical with girls, inappropriate touching, that was dealt very seriously and one boy was excluded but that's cultural issue. We are a school that deals with Muslim students who do not express themselves sexually and then the Roman Slovak express themselves sexually, the Pakistani girls are very separate you see that in mosques' (White female teacher)

'Sexual aggression we do not get much of that here probably because we have a large Muslim community. There is no specific gender equality policy but we deal case by case with issues of verbal abuse and bullying.' (White female teacher)

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‘The biggest influence on gender here is religion. Gender issues in school come from community and cultural ideas. Obviously girls are expected to cover their heads and not to socialise with boys, they go to mosques after school separately’. (White female teacher)

In the following extract a white male teacher raises his concerns about the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in the Roma Slovak community. Here, sexual activity and early motherhood is drawn upon to create the pathology of a particular ethnic minority community in terms of culture, ethnicity and gender, and ‘other’ the young people from this community (Tsouroufli, 2012). Pathologization on this occasion is sustained on a perceived difference with the norm (teenage pregnancy is not unusual among white British girls) and is only possible because of the minority status of the Roman Slovak community in multicultural Britain.

‘A lot of Roma Slovak would be sexually active from a young age. We had 5 pregnancies in key stage 4. As a community they have children quite young compared with what we are used to. Roma girls have low aspirations because they are expected to become mothers.’ (White male teacher)

Teachers in the first school did not use the term SRGBV to refer to acts of violence inflicted on ethnic minority students because of gender stereotypes in their families in and around the school. However, teachers’ perceptions of ethnic minority students and stereotypical expectations, constructed ethnic minority students as victims or perpetrators of different forms of SRGBV (psychological and sexual); Muslim girls sexually restrained, and restricted from educational and career opportunities; Roman Slovak girls sexually incontinent and with low aspirations; Roman Slovak boys as sexually aggressive. However, the focus group discussion with students from diverse backgrounds, including Roman Slovak boys, British Pakistani boys and girls, and students of Islamic faith did not

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indicate an awareness or dissatisfaction with teachers' perceptions and attitudes to ethnic minority students.

Teachers' perceptions reflect an intersectionality of ethnicity and gender, which resulted in practices of 'care' and normalization of ethnic minority students within an educational and societal context of white privilege (Mirza, 2009). The emphasis on gendered 'ethnic deficit' (Van Doodeward and Knopperds, 2018) in teaching and schooling may mean that the potential strain put on 'other' student identities is overlooked.

Intersections of gender and sexuality norms with SRGBV

In school 2 the data indicated that there was a culture of gender disrespect and gender inequality (Griffin, 2018) predicated and sustained on essential views about female students and staff, and gender stereotypes about academic and professional competence and legitimacy in the institution as the following quotes illustrate:

'Women as seen as less authoritative and worthy of respect. Women have to work harder. Also there is the perception that women are more emotional' (White female teacher)

'It has to do with who raises issues. Women are seen as emotional, always raising problems and not suggesting solutions. Women here have been made to feel belittled by senior management' (Black female teacher)

'If a difficult class needs to be covered it will be given to a man. There is an issue with young female teachers seen as fragile.' (White male teacher)

Pathologization of female staff influenced divisions of labour in school 2 and women's career progression and shaped a gender regime in which female staff and students were devalued and positioned as marginal in the institution (Connell, 1987).

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‘There is no strong female presence in senior leadership to raise the profile among staff and students. It was only last year that we appointed a senior female member of staff who seemed to have authority in a healthy way, a strong presence.’ (White male teacher)

A culture of gender disrespect and inequality (Griffin, 2018) was also evident in school 3 although staff relationships and career progression for women were better than in school 2. The gender regime in school 3 was sustained through gender beliefs, expectations and normative practices similar to school 2, including pathologization of female students; gender respectability; gender invisibility in the curriculum; and a sexist culture that depicted young girls as housewives or sexual objects.

‘Students think that women will stay at home and have babies, this is very much the culture here’ (White female student)

‘We had a student whose father was a nurse and he was being teased. He started saying his father was a doctor.’ (Ethnic minority male student)

Transgressions of gender and sexuality norms were taxing, resulting to sexual violence involving verbal abuse usually against girls in school 3 as the following quotes illustrate and inappropriate touching explored later in this section:

‘Girls are called names if they talk to a lot of boys but boys are not, you know sluts. (White female student)

‘Girls are called ugly for not wearing make-up and sluts if they wear too much make up’ (White female student)

‘When girls play unusual sports their sexual orientation is questioned’ (Ethnic minority female student)

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In school 2 gender norms about women's and girls' sexual conduct and the management of female bodies in professional settings and public spaces created a platform for constructing sexually active girls and women as not respectable (Tsouroufli, 2018) and subjecting them to various forms of SRGBV, mainly verbal abuse and name calling as the following extracts illustrate:

'A male member of staff called a female member of staff a slut because she had slept with many men. Another woman stepped in and things escalated and then there was a hearing.' (White female teacher)

'A girl was asking about contraception and boys would say why are you asking that? Does this mean that you are having sex? I found a culture here that if people are having sex like with someone in a different school or someone older the implications of the conversations I heard are that the girls are easy and they are not seen as respectable.' (White female teacher)

Institutional control and policing of female bodies was legitimized through sexualisation and objectification of female bodies and constructions of women as dangerously seductive (Tsouroufli, 2018). A male teacher mentioned that last summer an email was circulated by senior management regarding the dressing code for female staff: 'spaghetti strapped tops and figure hugging clothes should be avoided'.

Some students commented on the beliefs and practices of the school's gender regime and in particular the different standards, rules, and penalties for women and men. In the following extract the intersectionality of gender and sexuality stands out when a female student discussed the negative attention female homosexuality attracted, while male homesexuality seemed to be more accepted in the school.

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‘There is a teacher who is lesbian and a lot of people say I would not want to go near her but I respect her. The head-teacher is gay but no one talks about that because he is man. Everybody talks about the teacher who is lesbian. Women would always attract more attention no matter what they do’. (White female student)

However, some male students felt that non-adherence to normative gender expectations particularly in relation to sexuality would have more serious implications for males than females, usually leading to bullying.

If girls were acting masculine they would be accepted a little bit more than boys acting feminine. If a boy came to school with a skirt he would be bullied’ (Black male student)

Students mentioned many forms and incidents of SRGBV, mainly verbal abuse, name calling and sexual violence targeted at divergent girls and boys-those not fitting in with the norm in terms of sexual orientation and sexual conduct- or perceived to be making subject and career choices inappropriate for their gender. Girls’ and boys’ views about SRGVB varied particularly in relation to the severity and impact of different forms of violence. For example, one boy felt that the impact of verbal abuse of men was more long-lasting and serious compared to physical violence of women. Both students and teachers felt that SRGBV was trivialized and normalized in the school. However, students felt that SRGBV issues were not dealt effectively whereas teachers felt that action was always taken as the following extract illustrates:

‘A boy was trying to give a girl a hug. She reacted strongly. The boys think these are games and because it is normalized for girls they do not report it. My impression from the girls is that they think this is normal and it just has not register. When I bring issues to the pastoral team I know that action is always taken’ (White female teacher)

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Although there was some teacher awareness of SRGBV perpetuated by students, particularly sexual violence perpetuated by male students, some of the initiatives organized in school 2 in an attempt to promote gender respect and equality could be seen as reinforcing gender stereotypes and perpetuating the gender order. For example, a female teacher mentioned a workshop about pornography for boys while girls were given a workshop about how to develop community and be thankful.

In school 3 teachers' seemed to have little or no awareness of SRGBV incidents. Common forms of SRGBV in school 3 were verbal abuse and sexual violence perpetrated predominantly by boys towards girls and was predicated on male privilege endemic to the gender regime of the school. Young girls were aware of the difficulties in challenging young perpetrators of sexual violence and felt that sometimes it was easier to ignore it or not make a big deal out of it. The reluctance of girls to challenge sexual violence reflected entrenched views about the triviality of gender in education and society and the normalization of sexual violence.

'If a boy said something that a girl had heard before or meant it as a joke she would just say shut up and go away. It is not that serious' (White female student)

''Well if they touch you and you say stop 'they will say why are you like that, it is not a big deal?'. I mean if it happens many times and I report it, it will be taken seriously but I do not want the hassle''. (White female student)

'I think sometimes they do listen but they do not fully understand why you do not want them to touch you. You know you want to keep them as friends but you would not want them to touch where you do not want to be touched.' (Ethnic minority female student)

'I have not seen much done from the school.' (White female student)

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'Perhaps gender is trivial because you know it is not as serious as religion, people go to wars because of religion.' (White female student)

The qualitative baseline data from schools 2 and 3 suggests that the perceived triviality of gender and sexual norms and absence of a coherent plan of gender action sustained school processes and beliefs that distribute women/girls and men/boys into different positions and constitute a regime of gender inequality and gender based violence (Connell, 1987). Ethnicity, culture, and religion did not emerge as prevalent intersections in the gender regimes of schools 2 and 3. This difference with school 1 might be related to the ethnic diversity of staff (white-British, British-Muslim and European) and student population (not predominantly Muslim) as well as the geographical locations of schools 2 and 3.

Conclusions

This paper raises important issues and questions that require attention when designing and implementing research projects and interventions in schools aiming to eradicate SRGBV and promote gender equality. First, the complexity of gender inequalities and their intersections with other inequalities; the perceived triviality of gender and normalization of SRGBV sustained on entrenched gender and sexuality norms; and last but certainly not least the role of teachers and teachers' gender and ethnic identities in shaping gender cultures and changing young people's lives.

Teachers' and students' multiple identities (gender, ethnicity/culture, religion and sexual orientation) have been shown in this research to influence teachers' perceptions and gender expectations of their students' and student experiences. The baseline qualitative findings indicated that the very experience of being white, gay or straight, girl in a particular school in England intersected with gender experiences and enactments of gender based violence. Although other research has provided evidence that

Submitted on 22/01/2019
Accepted on 21/06/2019
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whitewashing and middle class schooling puts a strain on the identities of 'other' students (Chapman and Bhopal, 2018), no substantial body of literature has explicitly addressed intersections of gender with ethnicity, faith and/or sexuality in constructions and performances of SRGBV in the UK.

Whole-school approaches understood as working across the school community – with students, school staff, parents and the wider community and integrating violence into a broad programme of educational support, including gender training for teachers and curriculum revision, (UNGEI, 2013), can offer possibilities for successfully addressing intersecting inequalities of gender, ethnicity, faith and sexuality and challenging and changing the gender regime in schools.

However, schools and school cultures are located within particular geographies and wider contexts of social inequality and reflect entrenched views of society about gender and all strands of diversity. Commitment and gender action from governments and policy makers is required, as well as further research in the role of intersecting inequalities in constructions and enactments of SRGBV in combination with whole-school approaches.

Submitted on 22/01/2019
Accepted on 21/06/2019
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Funding

The data presented in this paper was collected for the project 'Developing Gender Equality Charter Marks in order to overcome gender stereotyping in education across Europe' UST/2015/RGEN/AG/ROLE, Action grants to support transnational projects to promote good practices on gender roles and to overcome gender stereotypes in education, training and in the workplace RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP/JUSTICE PROGRAMME (2014-2020), led by DECSY Sheffield in partnership with University of Wolverhampton, Oxfam Italy, University of Florence, Anthropolis Association, Hungary and Central European University Budapest, Hungary.

However, the ideas discussed in this paper are the views of the author.

Submitted on 22/01/2019
Accepted on 21/06/2019
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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the research participants for their time and trust. Also I would like to thank the European Commission for funding the project 'Developing Gender Equality Charter Marks in order to overcome gender stereotyping in education across Europe' UST/2015/RGEN/AG/ROLE. Last but not least I would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive feedback.

Submitted on 22/01/2019
Accepted on 21/06/2019
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