

Gender issues in the teaching and learning of ICT in secondary schools in Rwanda

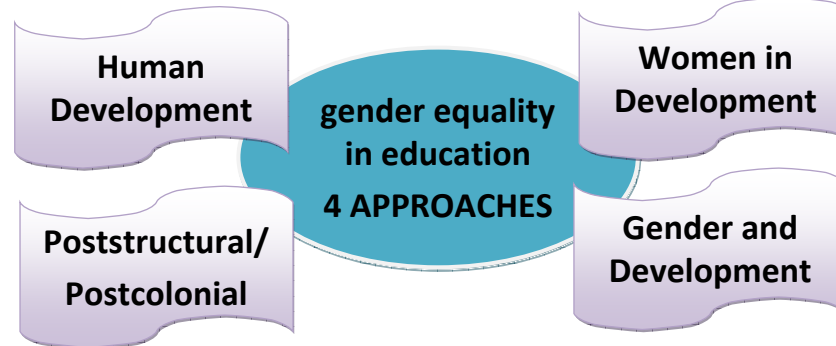
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Background

- Gender equality is integral to EFA and the MDGs.
- Rwandan policy promotes gender equality.
- Rwanda promotes ICT in education to support development of a knowledge based economy.

Findings at a glance

- Students and teachers are interested in and attach importance to ICT. This is linked to future job prospects and national development.
- Girls, boys and teachers hold gendered constructs of girls' and boys' ICT abilities.
(girls are perceived as weak, unmotivated & not confident and boys as hardworking, confident & eager to discover)
- School and classroom environment enhance existing gender differences.
This includes inadequate resources, the curriculum and teaching and learning processes
- Gendered patterns in out-of-school use of ICTs disadvantages girls, rural students and students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.



Research questions

- What are teachers' views and experiences of teaching ICT to girls and boys?
- How do teachers interact with girls and boys in ICT classrooms?
- How do students view and interact with ICTs inside and out-side of school and to what extent are their views and interactions gendered?
- How does the existing policy, practice and status of ICTs in schools influence teaching and learning of ICT?

Relevance to Policy and Practice

- The study can inform the process of introducing the ICT curriculum in schools, which is still in the early stages.
- Recommendations will help policymakers put in place strategies to improve access and equity concerns, already evident in the technology related subjects
- The study will recommend classroom practices that improve acquisition of ICT skills for both girls and boys, for use by teachers and teacher educators, including colleagues at KIE.



I am a lecturer at Kigali Institute of Education and a researcher in EdQual's project, 'Use of ICT in Basic Education'. At one time, I also coordinated all EdQual activities in Rwanda. In order to do all this, I have had to work part-time on my PhD for much of the study period.

As a teacher educator, I have longstanding interest in gender and education and also have to teach gender related courses at the institute. My doctoral research adds value to the 'Use of ICT' project through exploring issues of gender along more dimensions (see the central diagram) than the main project.

Publications

- Rubagiza, J. Were, E. & Sutherland R. (2011) Introducing ICT into Schools in Rwanda: Educational challenges and opportunities. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 31, 37-43.
- Aikman, S., Halai, A. & Rubagiza, J. (forthcoming) Conceptualising Gender Equity in Research on Education Quality. *Comparative Education*.
- Uworwabayeho, A., Rubagiza, J. Were, E. & Sutherland, R. (2009) Case Study: ICT and education in Rwanda in Unwin, T. (Ed.) *ICT4D: Information and Communication Technology for Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 228-229.

