

HERDSA

**CO-CONSTRUCTING LEARNING AND TEACHING EXPERIENCES:
A TDG ON DEVELOPING
GENDER SENSITIVITY OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

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Higher education in a Globalized World

- to nurture students with the commitment to values that appreciate diversity and a commitment to serve
- cultivating gender sensitivity among students is to prepare them for a globalized world with the awareness of how gender, together with other social factors, has been shaping people's lives in different cultures and places.
- it is to equip them with essential 21st century values and attitudes that accord them the rights to become tomorrow's global citizens.
- the ability to be reflective and reflexive about the relations between the self and the world is what a global citizen should possess.

A Teaching Development Grant Project
Working with Women –
Knowledges and Skills for social workers

Background of the TDG Project

- to develop teaching materials for social work education that targeted at Chinese students which have both local relevancy and practical values is pertinent in view of the following reasons:
 - women are always the majority of users of social welfare services;
 - a wide range of target groups – single mothers, new arrival women, women on social welfare, racial minorities, carers of the frail and ill health - have been served by social workers in the past two decades;
 - there has been a lack of gender sensitivity in social work practices resulting in less effective intervention;
 - many of the women service users are deprived and vulnerable pointing to the need to empower them but unfortunately, most of the existing services are remedial targeting at immediate problem solving.

Background of the TDG Project

- The project content included three parts:
 - developing gender-sensitivity exercises
 - video production on understanding divorced women and women who are receiving social welfare, and social workers' perspectives and work strategies
 - video production on skills of running support groups that empower women by using single mothers as an example.

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

- Sensitivity to diversities has always been considered necessary for universities graduates who are facing a globalizing world.
- One of the social divisions – gender – has to be attended to particularly where traditional definitions of masculinities and femininities have been dominant.
- Gender sensitivity is the awareness of how gender, together with other social factors such as age, class, ethnicity, disabilities and sexualities, has constructed young peoples' relationships with others, choices of career, aspiration for the future, and most of all, shaped their understanding and expectation on themselves.

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

- The TDG project was designed in a way to be fully integrated with the teaching and learning of the course Gender and Social Work.
- Class exercises that are interactional and can strengthen students' gender sensitivity are necessary tools to be developed.
- It was a co-construction process of teaching and learning when the students were 'teaching' and the teacher was learning from what and how they 'teach'.

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

- The steps involved
 - grouping of students into four to five.
 - They were invited to develop a class exercise which can facilitate the development of gender sensitivity. They were encouraged to be creative in developing exercises which can be games, role plays or in any other formats which have high applicability and therefore, utility values in the local context.
 - The students, after designing the exercises, conducted them in class. All students were invited to feedback on the design and the possible impact of the exercises.
 - Reflections were also collected about the awareness of gender and its impact on the self.

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

The Handbook on Gender Sensitivity Activities



Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

The Handbook on Gender Sensitivity Activities

- Part I – Introduction (about what gender sensitivity is; why gender sensitivity; the process of co-production of the exercises/activities; how to use the Handbook)
- Part II – the activities/exercises
- Part III – useful materials (about definitions of terms; references)
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「性別敏銳」活動

第二部分：



👤 FACEBOOK睇真D

👤 我的「性」名-姓名與性別

👤 男女情感大不同

👤 衣see? easy? -衣著與性別

👤 兒時回憶：

意識到自己性別的第一個回憶

👤 男女「甫士」大不同-反應與性別

👤 典型男女

👤 虛幻與真實-廣告人生

👤 我會做好呢份工-職業與性別

👤 傳媒放大鏡-傳媒與性別

👤 是男是女?

👤 猜猜畫畫「麵包人」

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

The Handbook on Gender Sensitivity Activities

- An example of the exercise
 - Watching the mass media (p. 20)
- The objectives are
 - examining the media representation of women's images
 - analyzing how media representation has constrained women/men's understanding of themselves including their images and behavior
 - critically examining the roles of the mass media in reinforcing gender stereotyping
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- The steps
 - Dividing the participants into small group; giving them some local newspapers; inviting participants to identify titles, subtitles, pictures that suggest gender stereotyping; reporting to the whole class about what they identified;

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

The Handbook on Gender Sensitivity Activities

- group discussion on
 - Is reporting on female more than that on male?
 - What are associated with female and male respectively?
 - For example. what about pictures, words associated with sexuality, incidents that involve women/men?
 - How do you understand the differences in reporting?
- After conducting the exercise in the class, feedback from classmates was invited.
- It was found that students enjoyed this exercise very much.
- During discussion, they shared the discovery that female actors were reported much more than male actors among entertainment news reports.
- Participants were also interested to explore the gender differences in reading newspapers such as the parts they read more.
- There was a rich discussion on the social construction of gender in the mass media.

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

The Handbook on Gender Sensitivity Activities

- Another example: Childhood memories
 - sit back and take deep breaths
 - silently reflect back to your childhood, to the first memory you have about when they discovered you (as males or females) were different from the opposite sex;
 - observe where you are, what is happening, who is involved, what is being said, who is giving you the message, about what it means to a boy or a girl
 - after a few minute, return to the present
 - ask participants to open their eyes and DRAW their first memory of being different as girl or a boy (a series of pictures or just one picture which represents their first memory of differences as a girl or a boy
 - pair up with the person next to them, explain the meaning of their pictures to each other

Developing gender-sensitivity exercises

The Handbook on Gender Sensitivity Activities

當我買幼稚園校服...



小時候，我一直也將自己當成是男孩。家人也是一樣，從小到大的我也當成男孩。我也是在家中排行最小的。我的舅父是居住在澳洲的，他曾經在我還是小孩的時候寄了一張有樹熊的明信片給我，我相信他也知道我是女孩子，但他在明信片上寫了一句「快快長大成為大男孩」。到現在，我仍然保存著這張明信片，那明信片就如圖中所示。在我還是很小的時候，他也把我當作是一個男孩。後來，我在幼稚園高班的時候才留長頭髮，過去一直也是短頭髮、「男仔頭」的樣子。我覺得男孩與女孩的最大分別便是女孩要穿裙子，而男孩便和女孩不一樣。直到我要到幼稚園上學，我才意識到我是一個女孩子。就如圖中左面所示，媽媽和我一起買校服，那裡的人都以為我是男孩，但因為我是買女生的校服，到那刻我才覺得自己是個女孩。

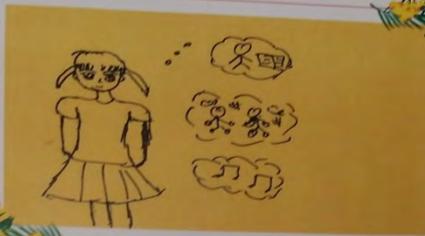
男女如廁大不同

我第一次意識到自己有別於男孩是於大約三、四歲的時候。那次，哥哥在家中去洗手間時沒有關門，我因而看到哥哥如廁和女孩子是不同的。女孩都是坐著如廁的，但我卻看到哥哥是站著如廁的。那一次，我發現到男女之間的分別。



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琴棋書畫 = 女孩子？



尚記得在幼稚園的時候，我參加了步操表演，媽媽跟我說女孩子一定要穿裙子，還要看書、懂畫畫和學音樂。總而言之，女孩子就是要參加一些靜態的活動。那時的我亦很認同這種想法，讀了社會工作以後，我明白了女孩子不一定要靜態，也不一定要參加某些活動才是女孩，然而，我自己從小到大也很喜歡看書、畫畫和聽音樂，到現在仍然都是。

裙子的意義

我畫的圖畫就是一個穿裙子的女孩子。其實對於甚麼時候發現自己是個女孩子，真的沒有甚麼特別印象。但我覺得只有女孩子才可以穿裙子，因此便把這印像畫了下來。



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Video production on understanding divorced women and intervention strategies

- interviewing two divorced women who have been living on social welfare and their social workers
- The four interviews were recorded in a DVD. The contents were transcribed and questions to discuss were proposed



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社會工作訓練教材
(供教師使用)

婦女工作 - 社會工作知識與技巧

第一部份：
單親服務社會工作員
及
單親女士訪談

作者：洪雪蓮博士

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Video production on skills demonstration

- Support group has been proved to be effective in empowering the vulnerable groups and in particular, the disadvantaged women in the west.
- Its application in the local context is developing.
- A video on skills of running support group for women using divorced women as an example was produced.
- Four students were involved in conducting the role playing.

Video production on skills demonstration

- The role playing of the four parts of the support groups, including:
 - commencing a group,
 - storytelling,
 - identifying differences and commonness in stories,
 - developing themes of concern for discussion
- Four social work students enrolled in the Gender and Social Work course playing the roles of single mothers

SAMSUNG



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社會工作訓練教材
(供教師使用)

婦女工作 - 社會工作知識與技巧

第二部份：
帶領「支持小組」

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「支持小組」

Conclusion

- This TDG project has made a valuable contribution to the development of training materials for working with disadvantaged women.
- The products of the Project included a teaching kit which is composed of two handbooks/manuals and two DVDs.
 - The Handbook on Gender Sensitivity Activities
 - 2 DVDs
 - The first DVD consists of interviews with two experienced social workers and two single mothers who have been receiving social security benefits. The second DVD recorded a role playing of four parts of a support group for divorced women.
 - A manual on working with women – social work knowledge and skills
 - The transcripts of interviews, suggested questions for discussion, and the details of the support group model are provided in the manual.

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Conclusion

- The teaching approach that informed the project has significant implications on future pedagogic practice.
- The co-construction of teaching materials together with students is a novel experience for many students as well as the Investigator.
- Social work education has long emphasized the cultivating of values and developing of the ability to self-reflect in addition to imparting knowledge and skills.
- The integrating of creative ideas and experiential, participatory and reflective skills into learning will definitely strengthen the ability of students to acquire knowledge and skills, and develop reflexivity in practice.
- Though this TDG project was developed in collaboration with social work students that target at social work teachers, the strategies to co-construct learning and teaching experiences by teacher and students can definitely be applied to other disciplines with modifications.

Thank you
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