

Global Knowledge Project

Gender Equality in Norwegian Schools

A Case Study of Kvåle and Norane Skule

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ABSTRACT

Study focused on teachers and Administrators in the two Norwegian schools namely Kvåle and Norane schools. Therefore wish to investigate how teachers and administrators apply and promote gender equality as they carry out their duty. Their research will focus on the following areas;

- The motive behind gender equality in schools;
- The benefits of gender equality to both teachers and pupils;
- The methods/ activities used to promote gender equality in schools and;
- Challenges faced by Administrators and teachers as they try to promote gender equality in schools.

The essence of this approach is basically to see if gender equality truly exist in schools.

To achieve this, the researchers will use different tools which include;

- Qualitative study and the existing literature: the essence of the literature is to see what scholars or human rights groups have said about gender equality in schools.
- The other tool is interview which will help the researchers to gather up-to-date information on gender equality.
- The researchers will also use observation to come up with the information for the paper.

This research shall seek to present data which will be based upon the results of the researcher's existing literature interview and observation that be made.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

So many scholars have attempted to define Gender in different ways. Gender is said to be a state of being either male or female with great reference to social and cultural difference rather than biological ones (www.apa.org/lgbt/resources/guidelines.asp). Others refers gender as the attitudes, feelings, and behaviour that a given culture associates with a person `s biological sex (American Psychological Association, 2006). World Health Organisation (WHO) refers to gender as the socially constructed characteristics of women and men such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men though that varies from society to society. The Norwegian society have values which are rooted in egalitarian ideas. This dates back to the 20th century and the belief is based on the principle that people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities. All this is regardless of the social, economic or other distinctions such as income, race, gender, religion, or political beliefs. These ideas are addressed by the welfare state laws. The egalitarian values which are at the root of the welfare state as elaborated in (www.studyinnorway.no) manifest themselves throughout Norwegian society in many ways. One example is in the field of gender equality. Gender equality is the ideal that women are equal to men and should therefore have equal say in the running of society in some parts of the world that is not the case. Norway was one of the first Nation to give women the right to vote. The first Prime Minister was elected in 1981 and the first female priest in Norway was appointed in 1961. Government has supported Gender equality though the goal of total equality remains a long way off. Male's roles as fathers has certainly changed because of gender equality and are now even entitled to paternity leave quota. This helps and allows them to spend some time with the children. .

The researcher would like to find out whether gender equality exist in Norwegian schools namely Kvåle and Norane where the study was conducted and highlights some of the achievements and challenges.

Gender equality is the state of being male and female (www.gender.no/policies-tools) this is typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather biological ones. The Norwegian is committed to the attainment of its vision of gender equality and

it's considered as one of the most gender equal countries in the world. Norway is a party to the 1979 United Nations Conventions on the Elimination of All forms of

Gender in Norway is regulated by the Norwegian Gender Act which came into force in 1979 but was recently amended in 2005. In an effort to promote gender equality at all levels of education, the Norwegian government recognised the need to mainstream gender equality into the school curriculum, as well as within the different aspects of the education curricula. All the boys and girls have an equal right to education, regardless of social and cultural background or special needs. There is also legislation on representation of both sexes in Boards of 40% either sex (www.gender.no/).

The research will try to establish if truly gender equality exists in schools and how it's promoted.

1.2 Background

Kvåle school is located about a kilometre west of Sogndal municipality and has a total of forty seven (47) thirty two (32) female and fifteen (15) male. The pupil's population is three hundred and seventy one (371) of which one hundred seventy three (173) are female and one hundred ninety eight (198) are male. The school runs from the sixth (6) grade to the tenth (10) grade. They have one Head teacher and two Deputy Head teachers but each with specific duties.

The school caters for pupils from the surrounding Songdal community and some come by bus to the school and has a good reputation for producing good results.

Norane about fifteen (15) minutes' drive from Sodndal on your way to Leikanger. It has a total population of seven (7) teachers of which six (6) are female and one (1) male. They have fifty five (55) pupils composed of twenty seven (27) girls and twenty eight (28) boys. The school runs from the first (1) grade to the seventh (7) grade though they have also a section of the kindergarten school to cater for the children in the surrounding community.

Table 1: Kvåle Skule

| | Number of students | Number of teachers |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Female | 173 | 32 |
| Male | 198 | 15 |
| Total | 371 | 47 |

Table 2: Norane Skule

| | Number of students | Number of teachers |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Female | 27 | 6 |
| Male | 28 | 1 |
| Total | 55 | 7 |

Knowing how important gender equality is globally and in Norway to be specific gives the researchers a task to find out how it's practiced at a school level though restricting it to the two selected schools mentioned above.

Equality is defined as the state of being equal especially in status, rights, or opportunities. This is qualified if there is fairness, justness, equitability, impartially, even handedness, egalitarianism, equal rights, equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Knowing that Norway is considered as one of the countries where egalitarian have had greater success than elsewhere (Maagero and Simonsen 2005, p 13). Egalitarian is a belief based on the principle that all people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities. Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Thus, Norway a party to the CEDAW is under obligation to put up strategies aimed at eliminating discrimination against in order to ensure that women and girls are able to access and enjoy their rights in full. Further, Norway ratified all the human rights treaties and international conference agreements which provide legal foundation for ending gender discrimination and gender based rights violations. Inspired by the international trend on gender movements, the Norwegian government in 1978 adopted

the Gender Equality Act which provides the promotion of gender equality and the improvement of the position of women. Women and men shall be given equal opportunity in education, employment cultural and profession advancement. This is based on the on the principle of non-discrimination which is the cornerstone and basis for promoting gender equality. The Act was amended in 2005 and revised in 2013.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The main objectives of this study is to investigate how teachers and administrators implement and perceive gender equality in schools or at the place of work. The study will also look at Norway been an egalitarian society and see whether this promotes gender equality at a school level with the help of the welfare state. It is in this light that these researchers thought it is necessary to:

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study had the following objectives:

1.4.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To establish how Administrators and Teachers implemented and perceive gender equality in schools.

1.4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Find out whether gender equality exist in selected Norwegian schools (Kvåle and Norane)
- Find out how gender equality promotes or enhances perform among pupils
- To know the enrolment of pupils in schools per gender
- To know what teachers feel about gender equality in a school setup
- To find out as to whether the teachers face any challenges in their teaching relation to gender equality
- To find out how School Administrators promote or handle gender equality issues

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Since schools are the common grounds where children meet from different backgrounds, nationality, religious groupings and status. The Administrators together with teachers have a huge responsibility to make sure the school promotes Gender Equality in whatever activity is going on in schools for this represents the belief of the bigger picture the nation at large. So the aim will be to study how gender equality is promoted and practiced at the level including the classroom.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i Is it true that gender equality exist in your school?
- ii What activities take place at your school that promotes gender equality?
- iii. How beneficial is gender equality to you as a teacher and pupils?
- iv How effective is gender equality knowing pupils come from different backgrounds?
- v. How do you encourage gender equality in your school?
- vi What is the motive behind gender equality in schools?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The current study was significant because it would help the researchers learn how Norway a developed country has managed to promote gender equality in schools and other sectors. The research was also important for academic purposes.

1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to Sogndal Municipality in particular the two schools namely Kvåle and Norane where the researchers did their practical placement. In terms of material orientation the study limited itself to discussing gender equality in schools specifically to do with both pupils and teachers.

1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study suffered from the following main limitations:

1. We were not allowed to interview pupils as it is not allowed according to the law.
2. There was a language barrier as some teachers could not freely express themselves in English
3. Some of the informants lost the questionnaires which could have been used to generate primary data. In order to reduce the effect of this problem, the researchers resorted to using direct interviews.
4. The research was only limited to two schools where the practical placement was done, this negatively affected the researchers from collecting data. There was a longer break in between the two schools where practical placement are concerned. This problem somehow affected the research as we needed the information from both schools to continue with their research.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Boswell and Cannon have described Literature review as a well written synthesis of information about a topic that includes a discussion on the research that has been done and the evidence gathered, the methodology, the strength, and weaknesses of findings and the gaps that require more knowledge.

2.2 Definitions and descriptions of gender equality in schools.

The term gender according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) is referred to as the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught appropriate norms and behaviours – including how they should interact with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities and work places. When individuals or groups do not “fit” established gender norms they often face stigma, discriminatory practices or social exclusion – all of which affect education and many other aspect of life. All in all gender refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that a given culture associates with a person ‘biological sex. Behaviour that is compatible with these expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviour that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity.

The term equality has several references in education. Researchers and educators consider equality with respect to school finances, expenditure, resource and access to the curriculum, distribution of students for instruction, academic and social mobility, classroom processes and educational policies (Jencks, 1972). Equality and Human rights commission Scotland also defines Equality being about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality recognises that historically, certain groups of people with particular characteristics e.g. race, disability, sex and sexuality, have experienced discrimination.

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and

priorities of both, women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups women and men (for example: women belonging to ethnic minorities, lesbian women or women with disabilities). Gender equality is both, a human rights principle and a precondition for sustainable, people-centred development (adapted from UN Women).

The **United Nations** showed its seriousness and commitment on gender equality issues by including it in the **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2030 AGENDA**. This was held in New York from 25th to the 27th September 2015. It showed how much serious the member states were where gender equality issues are concerned by including it as goal number five (5). Taking this seriously the United Nations had to include gender equality among the Sustainable Development goals

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

While the world achieved progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment under the Millennium Development Goals (including equal access to primary education between boys and girls), women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part the world.

Gender equality is not only a fundamental right but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work and representation in political and economic decision-making process will fuel sustainable economies and benefits societies and humanity at large (www.un.org/sustainable)

2.3 LEARNING THEORIES

Burns (1995: 99) “conceives of learning as a relatively permanent change in behaviour with behaviour including both observable activity and internal processes such as thinking, attitudes and emotions.” It can also be said that learning theories are simply concepts that psychologists and other researchers have come up with to explain how living organisms absorb, process and retain information during learning.

2.3.1 Cognitive learning theory

The Cognitive learning theory was developed as a reaction to behaviourism which had been a dominant theory for a long time. This theory's emphasis is on the inner mental activities opening the “black box” of human mind significant and necessary to understand how people learn. Mental process such as thinking, memory, knowing and

problem-solving have to analyse. The theory basically involved in all the processes of learning.

Jean Piaget (1890-1980) was the first to state learning is a developmental cognitive process that student create knowledge rather than receive. He recognised that students construct knowledge based on their experiences and that how they do so is related to their biological, physical, and mental stage of development.

From the above if a child has had an experience in the past of gender inequality of either going through it or witnessing it others would grow with hate or become the ones in future violating it. So it's good that in Norwegian schools gender equality is promoted seriously starting at an early age. Apart from that even in the Norwegian society or community gender equality is treated very seriously. Norway was one the first countries to have a female Prime Minister and a first female Bishop. If a child is exposed to gender equality at an early age as they grow it becomes part of them as such they will not find it had to respect other genders.

2.3.2 Dialogue

According to Freire (2003) in his pedagogy of the oppressed dialogue requires an over present curiosity on object of knowledge and hence dialogue is never an end in itself but an engine or rather a means to develop comprehension about the object of knowledge. In his articulations against 'banking concert' further states that if learners are allowed to express themselves freely and not regarded as 'empty account's by their teachers, then such students are likely to participate vigorously in dialogue as a process of learning and knowing; and hence such a dialogical virtue is manifested later in adulthood for heathy society. One is capable of critically contemplating on issues and looking at the world perspective view in a dialogue encounter with others. Provided with the proper tools for such an encounter, the learner can gradually perceive person and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, become conscious of his or her own perceptions of reality, and deals with it critically (Freire, 2003).

Referring to Freire if children are encouraged at an early stage to believe in themselves regardless of child they will develop confidence in themselves and can become part of their life. Some people would want to match certain subjects or careers to a particular gender that can have an effect on the child. Its better a children choose on their own. So if pupils are allowed to form groups regardless of gender and discuss with those of different gender that create a positive perception among pupils.

2.3.3 Behaviourism Theory

This is a theory which states that learning is an observable action or behaviour. The psychologists and researchers that study and came up with this theory all focused on producing desired behaviour in living organisms. Behaviourism say that one can only state that learning has taken place by observing the behaviours. (www.cs.uct.ac.za). Pupils will observe from their homes, community and school how gender equality is observed and promoted and that can create the basis on how themselves will live in future. So it's important to expose children to good acts when they are young.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.

3.1 types of data

3.1.1 Secondary data

Various types of qualitative and quantitative data about gender equality was obtained from various documented sources.

3.1.2 Primary data

Primary data about gender equality at Kvåle and Norane schools was obtained through questionnaires, interviews and observations.

3.1.3 Challenges faced

We had a challenge with the second practical placement because there was space in between the first and the second practical placement hence this made the researchers to delay to collect the data needed to conduct the countries considered to have equality where gender is concerned. Furthermore, literature review indicates that gender equality is seriously included in the Norwegian legislations and education acts though still a number of challenges to gender issues keep surfacing. It is this contradiction that will be critically analysed by using empirical investigation into the case study of gender equality in schools at Kvåle and Norane.

3.2 Qualitative Methods

Literature clearly shows that Norway is a society which seriously promote gender equality. It also shows from literature review that there are still some portion of gender inequalities in some sectors. In order to achieve the aim stated in this study, the researchers decided to use in-depth interview and observation methods. Researchers intend to analyse and interpret the findings from the empirical research will help them to draw an appropriate conclusion and furthermore propose a further research on how gender equality in schools can be part of the school practice in every aspect of the learning and any activity taking place in school. It is therefore, necessary to consider in details the nature of the research being carried out and the instruments being used in this study.

3.3 Data collection Methods

Therefore, the researchers decided to use three methods of collecting data. These methods are interviews with teachers and administrators at Kvåle and Norane schools, literature review about the conduct of gender equality and also from the researcher's observations. As researchers, we believe that those are the best methods of research for this particular research and such the methods in question shall be employed for this piece of work. The rationale for using variety of tools, according to Merian, quoted in Simon-Uguru (1991:39), is that, the weakness of one tool is the strength of another. Therefore, combination of this investigation tools will help the researchers to achieve the best of each at the same time overcoming the unique deficiencies of each. The following are the details of the data collection methods:

3.3.1 In-depth Interview

The research was conducted at Kvåle and Norane Schools. The researcher was equipped with information on how an in-depth interview should be conducted. Silje Stundal a teacher at Kvåle was coordinating the selection of teachers to be interviewed and interviews were done without any disturbance. The rights to privacy of those interviewed was respected and information collected was for only for the purpose of the study and keeping confidentiality.

The positives picked from the interviews are that the selected respondents were able to provide the required information on gender equality since it was the requirement by law and the schools seriously practiced it. The interviews went on well though to some teachers language was a bit of a challenge because they could not come up with certain words in English.

The in-depth interview seeks to describe and find the meaning of the central themes in the subject matter. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees perceive. It seeks to cover both a factual and a meaning level through it is usually more difficult to interview on the meaning level (Kvåle, 1996).

According to the source (<http://sociology.about.com/od/ResearchMethods/a/Interviews>) in- depth interview is a method of qualitative research in which the researcher asked

open-ended questions orally and records the respondent's answer. Interviewing is typically done face-to-face, but can also be done via telephone. In-depth qualitative interviews, on the other hand, are flexible and continuous. They are not locked in stone and are often not prepared advance. In this kind of interview, the interviewer has a general plan of enquiry, however he or she has no specific set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order. The interviewer must, however, be fully familiar with the subject, potential questions, and plan so that things proceed smoothly and naturally, ideally, the respondent does most of the talking while the interviewer listens, takes notes, and guides the conversation in the direction it needs to go. It is the respondent's answers to the initial questions that should shape the subsequent questions. The interviewer needs to be able to listen, think, and talk almost simultaneously.

McNamara (1999) states that "interviewers are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to a certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g. to further investigate their responses".

Interviews can be structured or unstructured. The structured interviews consist of a list specific questions. The interviewer does not deviate from the list inject any extra remarks into the interview process. The interviewer may encourage the interviewee to clarify vague statements or to further elaborate on brief comments. Otherwise, the interviewer attempts to be objective and tries not to influence the interviewee's statements. The interviewer does not share his or her own beliefs and opinions. The structured interview is mostly a "question and answer" session (truecenterpublishing.com).

The unstructured interview is more free-wheeling. You may ask the same sort of questions as in the structured interview, but the style is free-flowing rather than rigid. It is more conversational. You adjust your questions according to how the interviewee is responding. You may even inject your own opinions or in order to stimulate the interviewee's responses (truecenterpubling.com).

When considering what type of qualitative research method to use, in the depth interviewing has many advantages. Possibly the greatest advantage in the depth of the detail from the interviewee. Interviewing participants can paint a picture of what

happened in a specific event, tell us their perspective of such event, as well as give other social indications. Social indications, such as voice, intonation, body language etc. of the interviewee can give the interviewer a lot of extra information that can be added to the verbal answers of the interviewee on a question. This level of detailed description, whether it be verbal or nonverbal, can show an otherwise hidden interrelatedness between emotions, people, objects unlike many qualitative methods of research (Weiss, 1994).

In addition, in-depth interview has unique advantages in its form. Researchers can tailor the questions they ask to the respondent in order to get rich, full stories and the information they need for their project. They can make it clear to the respondent when they need more examples or explanations (Emans, 1986).

Not only the researchers also learn about specific events, they can also gain insight into people's interior experiences, specifically how people perceive and how they interpreted their perceptions. How events affected their thoughts and feelings. In this, researchers can understand the process of an event instead of what just happened and how they reacted to it.

Another advantage of in-depth interview is what it can give to the reader of academic journals and papers. Researcher can write a clearer report to their readers, giving them a full understanding of the experiences of the respondents and a greater chance to identify with the respondent, if only brief (Weiss, 1994) .

The research needs information from teachers based on gender equality in schools. Therefore, researchers discovered that using such a method would bring out the most needed information to the fullest.

3.3.2 Observation Method

Using observation research the researcher comes up with the conclusion by making observations. It's a useful in most times and in some cases can act a first part of a research before a more structured and refined experiment is undertaken (<http://www.ehow.com>)

This kind of data collection the researcher sets out to observe human behaviour by observing and not by interviewing. This can require the researcher getting involved openly in the activities being observed and at the same time remaining aloof from the

activity. Here the researcher acts as an undercover cop. Participant observation is a well-established social science technique and has been in investigations of human interactions (John, 2009)

The research is based on gender equality in schools. So the researchers adopted this method so that they are able to discover things for themselves as to whether gender equality truly exist on the ground.

3.4 Population and Sample

3.4.1 Population:

The researchers decided to select five teachers from each schools (Kvåle and Norane) and administrators though at Norane only one administrator was involved because of the size of the school. The teachers selected were teaching actively and were conversant with English language. As for the Administrators the researchers included them because they are the ones who interpret government policies and legislation to the teachers.

3.4.2 Sample:

Teachers were picked because of their ability to communicate in English and also able to teach in some lessons in English. Kvåle and Norane were picked because researchers did their placement at these two schools and therefore wanted to take advantage of that. Purposive sampling method seeks out groups setting and individual where the process being studied are most likely to occur (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

3.4.3 Ethical Consideration:

Information collected will be kept as confidential as possible. It will be for the intended purpose and not otherwise. During the process of collecting data, the researchers shall restrict themselves to the rules, guidelines, and laid down procedures of the schools and individuals involved.

3.4.4 Data Analysis Procedure

At Kvåle five (5) teachers were interviewed and two Administrators including six (6) lessons observations while at Norane five (5) teachers were also interviewed though only one administrator was interviewed due to the size of the school. At Norane so many lessons were observed in so many subjects.

The data was later collected and compiled. Researchers jointly read through to make sense and meaning out of it. Data was arranged and allocated in theme to the researchers' satisfaction because it started making sense.

At the end the data collected through interviews, observations and of course from literature review was put together ready for reporting. The above mentioned tools were used to find ways and means of achieving the main aim of the study by realising that they are valid and reliable. The researchers realized that the instruments would be useful in achieving the main aim of the study.

The reporting of the results is organised as follows:

- Personal details of respondents
- Strategies used in implementing gender equality
- Teachers perception on gender equality
- Administrators perception on gender equality
- Challenges faced in implementing gender equality by both Teachers and Administrators

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1.1 Findings on personal details of Respondents

All respondents from Kvåle and Norane schools have long service and vast experience in teaching and gives the researchers a firm position that the information obtained from them could be valid and reliable. All the respondents both from Kvåle and Norane schools are teaching from lower primary to tenth grades. This gives a view that the data collected is from appropriate and reliable sources.

Strategies used in implementing gender equality

Information about strategies used to implementing gender equality was obtained through interviews, observation literature review:

4.1.2 Through Interviews

According to respondents interviewed both at Kvåle and Norane Schools on the following questions

When teachers were asked in which way the school encourages gender equality among teachers and pupils the majority respondents answered that gender equality is introduced to pupils at an early stage so that as they grow it becomes part of their lives. Others said it was a requirement by the Norwegian education system and hence there was need for teachers to continuously remind each other.

Another question was posed on the benefits of gender equality to them as teachers and this was what they answered Norwegian society want men and women to have the same right as it brings gender balance. This is beneficial to teachers as they can use different skills, methods and experiences in teaching and it is requirement by law.

On the question whether, pupils benefit in anyway as where gender equality is concerned the majority of the respondents agreed that gender equality is beneficial to pupils in the sense that it increases the learning among pupils. Gender equality at school will show pupils that gender is also equal in the rest of the society.

When respondents were asked to whether promotion of gender equality was effective regardless of ones background in response this is what was said regardless of the background pupils are supposed to be treated equally.

Furthermore another question was posed as to the motive of promoting gender equality to pupils as a teacher and this was how the answer was given, by promoting gender equality in a class, each pupil in the class will feel important and that they can make a difference. It will raise their confidence and therefore improve their learning. The other reason is that teachers want to make the pupils get used to gender equality and that everyone is equal whether you are boy or a girl.

A follow up question was asked as to whether pupils were free to interact or work with each other when given a class activity and in response the respondents said pupils are free to interact and work with anyone either boy or girl but the teacher can provide guidance where there is need and balance the groups in terms of gender. McMurray (2007:49) states “meaningful discussion should be promoted in a manner to ensure that learning is occurring, beliefs are substantiated by evidence, and minority opinions are protected,”

On the language a question was asked as to teachers on how they make pupils equal and this was the response there is no difference in language in schools because there is only one option which is Nynorsk and is decided by the municipality.

Lastly a question to teachers was asked on any challenges that they encountered as they try to promote gender equality in class and this was the response there is a challenge with some boys who have a tendency of teasing or looking upon girls and yet knowing what the law requires of them.

Furthermore questions were extended to Administrators

Firstly they were asked why they think free education encouraged gender equality in schools and this was the response, when choosing the future or making a choice gender does not matter.

Another question was asked as to how they encourage gender equality in schools the respondents answered that by encouraging pupils and Teachers to believe in themselves regardless of gender.

A question was asked on special privileges offered to certain pupils and how easy it was to handle pupils from different backgrounds or nationality, this was the response there are no special privileges offered to certain pupils except where one with a disability and others said that it's important to have an open mind and treat everyone the same as it is

the requirement by the law. Another administrator said by following instructions given to them by the department of education. It is also important to respect every pupil or family regardless of the background or nationality.

Last but not the least a question was raised to find out on any challenges they faced as they promoted gender equality in schools and the majority of the respondents said that there was no many challenges in schools but since the school was part of the society which might be experiencing challenges here and there.

4.2 Observations

These were the observations from the two schools namely Kvåle and Norane

The researchers observed that enrolment figures balanced when it came to gender and that showed that no gender was disadvantaged at the point of enrolment. Another observation by researchers was that pupils like working in groups despite Norway been an individualistic society. Generally pupils were free to each other and teachers. However, some pupils do not like to mix with pupils of different gender. An observation by researcher was that such pupils have either low esteem or are shy and some think they are the best such that they do not need any help from anyone.

Further observation from researchers was as pupils advance in grades then would prefer working or performing certain tasks alone. , Pritchard (2005) stipulated that each individual will adopt an approach to learning with which they are most comfortable and in doing so leave behind the approaches with which they are less comfortable with.

When given a task to perform without the guidance of the teacher pupils would prefer to be in the same group with those of the same gender. The researchers also observed when it came to performing certain tasks pupils considered themselves according to gender for example woodwork pupils would feel that is for boys and certain tasks for example music some pupils would consider such as for girls.

In situations where the teachers apportion pupils to particular in groups the researchers observed that the outcome is very impressive and has a variety of solutions because of the gender mix. There is also a good teacher-pupil relationship which is created as they work together in finding solutions to challenges that they face and they tend to respect each other's views and freely interact. Cruikshank (1995:2009) confirms that group

work “is an instructional procedure whereby pupils work together in small groups and are rewarded for their collective accomplishments”. The success of this method, especially in topics like gender which is taught in social sciences causes pupils to work together for both the individual and the common good of the class. Additionally, regardless of their social, affiliates backgrounds, pupils tend to get to know and trust each other as they work together, just as gender equality aims demands.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The researchers did their attachment at Kvåle and Norane Schools where at the same time conducted a research on a topic Gender equality in Norwegian schools though limiting it to the above two mentioned Schools. Norway is committed to the attainment of its vision of gender equality and is considered as one of the most gender equal countries in the world.

According to the findings in this study, the researchers believe that gender equality exist in the two schools based on the following:

The enrolment figures are well balanced in terms of gender equality which is a good sign that there is no one gender which is preferred. Also the Norwegian government policy by the Ministry of Education and Research is clear on gender equality and as a result teachers feel they have an obligation to implement or follow government policy. Some take or consider gender equality as part of their life since they have grown up in a society which respects gender equality.

As for the responses from majority of teachers, gender equality is an effective tool of teaching and allows pupils with different gender to blend in well and share and exchange ideals on a variety of topics. Spurlin (1995:1) describe learning styles as “characteristic strengths and preferences in the ways they take in and process information”. This can in a way break the barriers which exist between two different genders.

As per findings from management and staff it works well as they treat every teacher and pupil respectively the same regardless of gender. The management position is not restricted to a particular gender but anyone can occupy it as long as one qualifies. Teachers feel free to perform their duties regardless of their gender also come up with groups in class which are well represented and balanced in terms of gender.

Another point that is worth discussing is that gender equality is introduced to pupils at an early stage. Referring to Freire, (2003) if children are encouraged at an early stage to believe in themselves they will develop confidence in themselves and can become part of their life. So if pupils are allowed to form groups regardless of gender and discuss with those of different gender that create a positive perception among pupils. According to the Social Studies Subject Curriculum the main objectives of the content of social

studies in Norwegian schools is to deepen learners understanding of the relationship between social and personal life and stimulate recognition of diversity in social forms of ways of living that includes gender equality. The learners shall be provided with a greater ability to think freely from many perspectives in a critical and tolerant way (www.udir.no).

The other aspect worth noting from Administrators is that they do not face any challenges in promoting gender equality at Kvåle and Norane Schools. The pupils come from societies where gender equality is not an issue but accepted as part of their way of life. In case of misunderstanding on any related issue to do with gender Administrators and teaching staff can help to clarify or interpret government policy on gender equality. The researchers observed that during teaching most of the content or subject have taken care of gender equality. So pupils come across gender equality as they do other subjects and in a way that helps them connect to real life situation. Banks in Shaver (1991) found out how students studying political and social content in the school did become more open minded, analysed problems and devised problem solving inventory to categorise reactions to series of real life problems. Gender equality is one of those topics that can be studied under either political or social science. So as one for sure studies on their own they develop an open mind and are able to look at issues objectively.

Another observation by researchers is the seriousness that government attaches to gender equality that is evidenced from the policies and pieces of legislature which are there to take care of gender equality. According to the Ministry of Education and Research in Norway the purpose of social studies subject is to help create understanding and belief in fundamental human rights, democratic values and equality and encourage the ideas of active citizenship and democratic participation (www.udir.no).

The researchers observed that Schools act as breeding grounds for gender equality (www.norden.org). Schools are important arena for work to break down gender stereotypes and promotes alternative forms of masculinity, education and career choices, according to Nordic Ministers for Gender equality. .

Banks in Shaver (1991) found out how students studying political and social content in the school did become more open minded, analysed problems and devised problem solving inventory to categorise reactions to series of real life problems.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSION

The study focused on gender equality in Norwegian schools specifically Kvåle and Norane. Gender equality is a global issue and an important topic. The United Nations takes this subjects seriously and as a result came up with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and among the Goal number 5 looking at Gender equality whose aim is to transform the world where gender equality is concerned by 2030.

Norway been the member of the United Nations and one of the countries with an equal gender in the world. Also Norway been a member of the Nordic countries where equality between women and men is a fundamental value in the Nordic countries. Collecting and using gender equality data is fundamental to promoting gender equality in societies. Nordic co-operation on gender equality issues, including in the area of statistics, has contributed towards making the Nordic region the most gender equal region in the world today (www.norden.org). Norway is one of the first countries to have recognised women's rights to vote, first female Prime Minister, first female Bishop and supported by the pieces of legislature and relevant Acts. To show commitment the government has put in laws which mandates boards of parastatals and municipalities to have representation of both gender on the board.

The education sector has also put in policies which support and help in the observance of gender equality in schools. This helps the School Administrators and the teachers to carry out their duties.

It's further concluded that the majority of the teachers supports the motive behind gender equality in schools and investigations have also revealed that gender equality is highly promoted in schools at the same time introduced to pupils at an early stage. Therefore, concluding that this objective is strongly achieved.

Lastly as much as Norway is seen to have scored a mark on gender equality in schools and other sectors it can compare with what is prevailing in other parts of the world to evaluate itself and see where they need to improve. It should also add its voice by speaking against gender violations when they take place anywhere and provide assistance to victims of such.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

While gender equality is now a global issue and so many countries Norway among them are members to treaties whose interest is to promote gender equality or put to an end any form of discrimination. Though no tense, gender equality is there in the two schools namely Kvåle and Norane. Gender equality has contributed positively in the learning process. Therefore, to enhance the effectiveness of gender equality in schools, the following recommendations may be considered:

- There is still need for putting measures in place in form of laws to protect victims of gender equality especially against women or girls who are ever victims of such in other parts of the world.
- Gender equality should be seen as a central concern from kindergarten through the school final grade, whether it is taught as a part of other curricula or in separate units or courses. This can be so cardinal especially for the upcoming pupils if it's integrated into the curriculum and in many other activities which involve pupils.
- Pupils who do not want to work in a group of mixed gender can be asked to identify a friend then with time introduce one of a different gender.
- Teachers should come up with interesting programs on gender equality and make them simple to suit with the children's level of reasoning. Slavin (2006) contended that the teacher's role is to provide immediate feedback when specific behavioural patterns are observed.
- Teachers should be very much conversant with gender equality in order to practice, promote and teach it effectively in line with the Norwegian education system and government policy.
- When forming groups during a class activity the teacher should make sure that the groups are balanced in terms of gender.
- Schools should operate in line with the government policy and the community expectations as they try to promote gender equality in schools.
- Gender equality can be integrated in activities such as sports during physical education or any other activities in class to spice it.

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APPENDICES

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE: THE TEACHING STAFFS

**TOPIC: GENDER EQUALITY IN NORWEGIAN SCHOOLS:
THE CASE STUDY OF KVÅLE AND NORANE SCHOOLS.**

STUDENTS NAME: IREEN SIANKATA AND WEBSTER CHISOKO

We are students at Sogn og Fjordane University College pursuing Global Knowledge and we are carrying out this research as a requirement for course. You have been approached to take part in this research in order to help us generate necessary data for this study. We further wish to assure all the respondents that information being collected is purely for academic purposes and shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Q1. As a teacher in which way do you think the school encourages gender equality among teachers and pupils?

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.....Q2. How beneficial is gender equality to you as a teacher?

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.....

Q3. How beneficial is gender equality to pupils?

.....

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Q4. How effective is gender equality knowing that pupils come from different backgrounds?

.....

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Q5. What is the motive behind gender equality? Specifically as a teacher what do you want to achieve by promoting gender equality in a class?

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Q6. How free are the pupils to interact and work with each other when given a class activity?

Q7. How do you make your pupils equal in terms of different languages, for example Nynorsk and Bokmal?

.....
Q8. Do you have any challenges that you encounter as you try to promote equality
in class?

Thank you for your participation in this very important exercise.

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE: ADMINISTRATORS.

**TOPIC: GENDER EQUALITY IN NORWEGIAN SCHOOLS:
THE CASE STUDY OF KVÅLE AND NORANE SCHOOLS.**

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We are students at Sogn og Fjordane University College pursuing Global Knowledge and we are carrying out this research as a requirement for course. You have been approached to take part in this research in order to help us generate necessary data for this study. We further wish to assure all the respondents that information being collected is purely for academic purposes and shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Q1. As an administrator in which way do you think free education encourages gender equality in schools?

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.....

Q2. How do you encourage gender equality in your school?

.....
.....Q3. Are there special privileges offered to certain pupils?

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.....

Q4. How easy is it to handle pupils from different backgrounds for example nationality and religion?

.....
.....Q5. How are teachers encouraged to exercise gender equality in school?

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.....

Q6. Are there any challenges you encounter as you try to promote gender equality in school?

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.....

Q7. Are there any special programmes designed to promote gender equality at your school?

.....
.....

Q8. How many teachers (male and female) and how many pupils (boys and girls) do you have in your school?

Thank you for your participation in this very important exercise.