

Refiro-me ao paradigma da dádiva. Por fim, penso que seria de esperar mais discussão teórica feminista por parte de uma autora que tem trabalhado a questão. A obra em tudo teria ganho com uma maior problematização sobre a questão entre o cuidado e as mulheres e a recuperação de teóricas como Carol Gilligan, Joan C. Tronto, Eva Feder Kittay, ou o trabalho de Nancy R. Hooyman e Judith Gonyea que segundo o olhar crítico da perspectiva feminista analisa a prestação de cuidados nos Estados Unidos.

Ostrouch-Kamińska, Joanna, Fontanini, Christine, Gaynard, Sheila, (Eds.) (2012), *Considering gender in adult learning and in academia: (in)visible act*, Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej, 226 pp.

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With the global economic crisis, European adult education discourse has been overwhelmed with the issues of employability and there is a growing tendency for learning to be reduced to skills development, which is already evident in the recent EU documents. Emancipatory vision of adult education seems to be forgotten or used as a decoration to competitiveness and economic growth. There is «a silence on gender issues in adult education» (p. 12). In spite of long lasting resistance toward gender issues, since 1996 the Network has been successful in gathering researchers interested in problematization of gender in adult education and learning, and in keeping debates alive and provocative. It has raised interdisciplinary discussions related to *theoretical aspects* of gender such as gendered learning, masculinities-femininities, objective/situated knowledge etc. *Methodological dimensions* were also analysed through gender lenses which questioned andocentric epistemology and mainstream research approaches which privilege measurement and objectivity at the expense of narratives and subjective. Although gender is not neglected topic in education, academics and international organizations are mainly concerned with gender equality in formal education. Gender dimension in adult education in Europe remains marginalized. There is a great need to deconstruct obvious and visible, to enter hidden places and ambiguities and explore the grey area of gendered learning which goes much deeper than gender differences.

The book *Considering gender in adult learning and in academia: (in)visible act*, edited by Joanna Ostrouch-Kamińska, Christine Fontanini and Sheila Gaynard, is

a rare jewel. The book has been published in 2012 and it consists of selected papers presented at the two recent ESREA Gender Network conferences: meeting in Hull, UK in 2009 and Montpellier, France in 2011. The first conference was dedicated to participation and identity, and the topic of second conference is concerned with gender issues in higher education. This is a third publication by the Network that is a result of conferences. As editors pointed out «the book is an attempt to reveal the invisible gendered aspects and dimensions of academic structure, interactions, learning strategies, and effects of education on learners' identities and lives» (p. 18).

The publication is very rich and diverse in theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches and themes, due to various backgrounds of its contributors. The interdisciplinary approach to gender research reflects the complex reality of adult education and academia, and indicates the prevalence and significance of gender issues.

Selected papers are organized into four chapters:

First chapter **Towards Gender Awareness** is dedicated to emphasizing gender awareness by bringing up the debates around research issues in education and/or promoting research findings concerning gender issues. The first debate *Reason, unreason and transgression of reason. Regaining trust from margins*, by Maria M. G. Arenas (Univ. Nacional Autonoma de Mexico) draws attention to the importance of (auto)biographical narratives written by female scholars from the field of education. The research shows that great contribution to understanding relationship between epistemology and knowledge production can come from Latin women educationalists. This is followed by the study *Gender training in a BA management of development projects: cultural sensitivity versus gender competences* by Elisabeth Hofmann (Univ. Bordeaux, France), based on analysis of students' reactions to gender training, which outlined difficulties in introducing gender into academia due to the various resistances. *Lifelong learning and gender identity* by Emmanuel da Silva (Univ. Europeenne de Bretagne – Univ. de Bretagne Occidentale) shows how social differentiation in interaction, when unfavorable, triggers doing gender as a legitimate reference for social differentiation as a part of identity of students in lifelong learning process studying to become social workers. The research study of Martina Endepohls-Ulpe (Univ. Koblenz/Landau, Germany) *Are males disadvantaged in the educational system?* draws attention to male issue in education analyzing the situation of boys in the educational system, showing that if the graduation level and reading achievement are taken into account, boys fall behind girls in their educational outcomes. However, this underachievement has no influence on the learning process of adult males and success on the labor market. The author concludes that apparently, there are other factors related to gender influencing career possibilities and occupational context.

The second chapter **Policy, Participation and Structure** is introducing policy issues concerning gender in relation to adult learning and education in EU

countries. *Feminizing academia: introducing the gender perspective along with the reform of the higher education system in Poland* by Agnieszka Zembruzska (Univ. Lower Silesia, Poland) reveals discrepancies in male/female participation in the Polish academia, where fewer women are present in sciences compared to humanities. Her research is based around gender perspective in higher education system reform, which poorly supports the presence of women in academia, as being oriented towards purely economic aims. What follows are Portuguese experiences in Cristina C. Vieira's (Univ. Coimbra, Portugal) *Gender dimensions in Portuguese academia: an erratic relationship between political intentions and curricula priorities*. The main focus of this study is on gender question within post-secondary education curricula, Government support and national plans for gender equality. Despite the common belief that gender equality has been established, curricula attentions to this question continue to be deficient due to conservatism and low autonomy of academic institutions, negativity towards feminism, resistance to gender issues in public, and perceiving the research on gender equality as ideology. The next research example in this chapter *Gender differences in the participation in continuing training in Catalonia* comes from Carla Qesada, Pilar Pineda-Herrero, Berta Espona, Anna Ciraso and Alexandra Stoian (Autonomous Univ. Barselona, Spain). The authors analyze the data of two national surveys in order to determine the factors affecting gender participation in continuing education and training using the results to make policy recommendations and strategies to improve opportunities of women to participate in continuing education and their position on labor market. Maeve's O'Grady (Waterford Univ. Technology, Republic of Ireland) research *'Other'-wise: researching the habitus changes in women who participate in women's community education in Ireland* seeks to explore habitus changes in women's community education centre that arise as a result of participation. Article *Women in Polish pedagogy – strategies of 'survival'* by Lucyna Kopciwicz and Aleksandra Purzycka (Univ. Gdansk, Poland) is touching women's underrepresentation on the highest academic positions trying to reveal the main obstacles for women to pursuing academic career.

The first paper in the chapter **Identity, interaction and learning strategy** is *Gender differences in leadership styles of mature students* by Elmira Bancheva and Maria Ivanova (New Bulgarian Univ., Bulgaria) who ask question about how managers can overcome stereotypes related to male and female leadership and develop more comprehensive competences. The paper *Gender representation of university teachers in verbal interactions* offers insights into gendered communication among academic staff and students. The authors Christine Fontanini and Céline Avenel (Univ. Montpellier, France) concluded that teachers interact quantitatively less with women and that further analysis of university teaching that include gender dimensions are needed. In the following article *Gender and academic 'hidden' experience of students and the lecturers in Nigerian universities*, Felicia I. Ofoegbu, Bola Mary Agboola and Lucy A. Okukpon

(Univ. Benin, Nigeria) raised the issue about proportion of male and female students at Nigerian universities and their hidden gendered experiences. They also examined ratio of male to female academic staff and pointed out that there is significant inequality in professional hierarchy in Nigeria. Denise M. Carter and Julia Holdsworth (Univ. Hall, UK) continue debate about gendered learning experiences. The paper *Postgraduate learning strategies, gender and aspirations* is the exploration of student choices at Postgraduate level and how those choices are constructed by dominant gender bias.

The closing chapter **Flexibility, possibilities and (hidden) effects of adult learning** begins with the qualitative study *The importance of flexibility in the stories of successful part time students*. Pam Medhurst and Sheila Gaynard (Univ. Hall, UK) draw attention toward complexity of male and female experiences of being a part time student and emphasize the gender differences in student's journeys that are influenced by dominant understanding of gender roles. Claudia Quaiser-Pohl (Univ. Koblenz-Landau, Germany) in the paper *Academic careers in science and technology – why women are less represented than men* examines how mainstream discourses of educational institutions and teachers shape student's academic self-concept which further influence their career and academic choices contributing to the less representation of women in STEM. Joanna Ostrouch-Kaminska (University of Warmia and Mazury, Poland) goes beyond work-family dichotomy and discusses the statistical data that show that women are highly educated than men, but they occupy lower hierarchical job positions. The research *Higher education, labour market, and a family: is it worth being a highly educated woman in Poland?* offers insights on how men and women co-construct their marital relations. Following the debate on work, education and family roles, in the last chapter *What do women really, really want? A case study of mature women training to work in childcare*, Hazel Wright (Anglia Ruskin Univ., UK) criticizes the notion that modern, 21st century women completely moved away from traditional Victorian values and reveals that the female students engaged in training to work in childcare try to juggle between roles and put their children and partner first.

Conclusion

Relation between gender and adult education and learning has been explored from European and global perspective. (1) Taking into account research findings on gender issues throughout the world, (2) emphasizing the importance of considering policy issues in relation to gender in educational system and in academia, (3) further on, addressing gender questions through exploring identity and integration, and relating to various learning strategies, and (4) looking into gender topic while discussing possibilities and effects of adult learning, the book provides substantial body of knowledge, ideas and information on particularities

and depths of gender questions in the field of adult education and learning. Raising key issues such as gender meaning and male/female identity in regard to learning experiences, access and participation in adult education, authors of this book seem to be developing an ongoing debate on the (hidden) role of gender in adult education and lifelong learning, and thus contributing to path of making the invisible-visible.