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ABSTRACT

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TITLE

"Boys do cry!": Anti-(hetero)sexist practices and masculine transformations in primary school.

Even though the Greek Educational Act (N.1566/1985) clearly states –for the first time- that the aim of primary education is the integration of pupils' personalities regardless of sex and origin, schools are still dominated by an aura of masculinism and other products of sexism (Askew & Ross, 1988; Politis, 1997), thus hindering an unforced development of the pupils' potential, free of the repressive and restrictive sex stereotypes and biases.

The study presents some anti-(hetero)sexist practices for boys in primary school, as a set of intervening and awareness actions aiming at reducing and/or eliminating those anachronistic and outdated male stereotypes and biases that have been established, for the subjects to be able to move and position themselves across the whole spectrum of gender characteristics, free from marginalisations and homophobic prohibitions (Askew & Ross, 1984; Anti-Sexist Working Party, 1985; Whyld, 1986; 1992; Whyld et al, 1990).

The present work, supported by the principles of post-modern feminism (Weedon, 1997) looks at male "identity" as a fluid, transforming and under constant negotiation act, as a repeated performance (Butler, 1990), and not as an "essence" of fixed and inflexible features, that is the way essentialism perceives it. Exposing the subjects to alternative, anti-conformistic and non-binary counter-discourses on gender, as well as their ability to critically stand in relation to the existing order of things in gender, results in actively negotiating their masculinities and re-defining their gender "identities" (see, Davies, 1989; 1997).

The intervening actions above entails political consequences –on the basis of governmental rhetorics in the last decades regarding the gender equality and reconstructing of the position of women in the Greek society –as intervening institutions like education, could adopt anti-(hetero)sexist practices in order to help reduce (hetero)sexism, aiming at

eliminating it to the benefit of the subjects themselves, as well as to the benefit of society and democracy.

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