

Publication

Gender Segregation in Education

Book Item (Buchkapitel, Lexikonartikel, jur. Kommentierung, Beiträge in Sammelbänden)

ID 4497698

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Year 2019

Title Gender Segregation in Education

Editor(s) Becker, Rolf

Book title Research Handbook on the Sociology of Education

Publisher Edward Elgar Publishing

Place of publication Cheltenham

Pages 193-212

ISSN/ISBN 978-1-78811-041-9

Keywords education, gender segregation, educational choice, gender stereotypes, opportunity structures, labour market returns

Gender segregation in education is still prevalent in Western countries. It affects young people's further educational trajectories and occupational attainment and is thus closely linked with gender segregation in the labour market and social inequality. This contribution provides an overview of the main segregation patterns, theoretical explanations and consequences of educational gender segregation. We first outline how gender segregation in education has been conceptualised and measured and summarise the patterns of gender segregation in secondary and tertiary education. We then review the dominant theoretical explanations of gender segregation in education: as a result of future-oriented rational choices, of present-oriented gender identity expression, social approval and gatekeeping, and of past socialization of interests, values and perceived skills. Furthermore, macro-level opportunity structures, such as cultural value systems and the structure of the education system and the labour market are discussed. After reviewing research on the labour market consequences of gender segregation, the contribution concludes with a discussion of the main gaps in sociological segregation research.

URL <https://www.elgaronline.com/view/edcoll/9781788110419/9781788110419.00020.x ml>

edoc-URL <https://edoc.unibas.ch/69166/>

Full Text on edoc No;

Digital Object Identifier DOI 10.4337/9781788110426.00020

ISI-number WOS:000499552300001