

## RESEARCH CLINIC

### General information

Supervisor:	Prof. dr. J. Mesman Dr. P.E.A. van den Bekerom (Public Administration)
Title of clinic:	When, why, and how do teachers represent?
Number of students:	5
Major ( <i>if applicable and approved by the Major Convener</i> ):	
(Pre)requisites ( <i>if applicable</i> ):	Students need to be fluent in written and spoken Dutch.

### Research context

In order to deal with important societal issues such as the position of women in society, ethnic profiling, the discrimination of transgender individuals, but also less conspicuous issues such as population ageing, public organizations should be representative of the communities they serve. Only when a public organization looks like those it serves in terms of race, gender, social class or other characteristics will it act for and in the interest of disadvantaged citizens. In general, the theory of representative bureaucracy holds that “passive representation—whereby an agency’s workforce reflects the demographics of the clients or citizens it serves—helps ensure active representation—whereby bureaucrats respond to the needs and interests of their social counterparts in the general population” (Ricucci, Van Ryzin, & Li, 2015, 121). Through active representation, public organizations become more inclusive, fair and equitable.

The focus of this project is gender representation in primary education. Teachers can have a powerful “role model” effect based on the lengthy interaction time they have with students. Moreover, in certain contexts teachers can also influence curriculum and pedagogy changes as well as the actions of other teachers via formal and informal interactions (Atkins & Wilkins, 2013). The key research question that we would like to pursue is: *When, why, and how do teachers represent the gender of their pupils?* To answer this research question, we will conduct interviews with Dutch primary school teachers.

This research clinic is part an international research project on gender representation in primary education, led by professor Kenneth J. Meier from American University in Washington DC. Data in China and India have already been collected and we are planning on collecting data in the US and the Netherlands in the second half of 2020.

Atkins, D. N., & Wilkins, V. M. (2013). Going beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic: The effects of teacher representation on teen pregnancy rates. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 23(4), 771-790.

Ricucci, N. M., Van Ryzin, G. G., & Li, H. (2016). Representative bureaucracy and the willingness to coproduce: An experimental study. *Public Administration Review*, 76(1), 121-130.

## **Students' tasks and activities**

*Please specify the tasks and activities, timeline, the learning aims and how they are assessed, i.e. what the deliverables will be.*

Timeline: September 2020 – January 2021

Hours per week: ca. 8 hours

Tasks: Each student will plan and conduct interviews with approximately 10 primary school teacher in the Netherlands, and transcribe and code the interviews. In addition, they will write a brief report on the findings.

Meetings: The group will meet every 2 weeks. In these meetings, we will discuss literature on representative bureaucracy as well as the research design of the project. Students will also be trained in how to conduct qualitative interviews and how to process the data they have collected.

Deliverables: Coded transcripts and brief report on findings