

Gender Bias in Middle School Classrooms

By: Jessica Baker

Question

- Is gender bias still occurring in middle school classrooms? If so, what is the cause of the gender bias and how can it be prevented?

Significance

- See if gender bias is occurring
- Find the cause
- Decide how to eliminate it
- Ensure gender equity in classrooms

Observations

- Hartford Magnet Middle School 6th grade history class
 - Received permission from IRB
- Guidelines from *Another Set of Eyes*
 - Seating Chart
 - Verbal Flow
 - Tally sheet

Findings

- Observations:
 - Average Number Girls: 8.89
 - Average Number Boys: 9.78
- Called on during class:
 - Boys: 63.3%
 - Girls: 36.7%

Findings

- Participation

- Girls

- Definitions

- Short answer

- Called on without raising hand

- Boys

- Great confidence

- Called on when misbehaving

Thesis

- Gender bias still exists
- By Middle School:
 - Internalized gender bias
 - Unwillingness to take risks
 - Lower confidence levels

Research

- Past gender bias project
- Articles:
 - "Gender and Developmental Differences in the Academic Study Behaviors of Elementary School Children" by Thomas Hancock
 - "Gender Differences in High Achieving Students in Math and Science" by Sally M. Reis
 - "Middle School Advisories: A Vehicle For Developing Students' Gender Self-confidence" by Linda Whitney

Conclusions

- Change in:
 - Confidence levels and self-esteem
 - Study habits
 - Attitude towards achievement
- Results in:
 - Less class participation
 - Inferior learning experience

Recommendations

- Options for teachers:
 - Hold more group activities
 - Self, peer, & student assessment
 - Discussions on gender equity and gender roles with students
 - Team up with school counselor