
NEWSLETTER

The Relation between Teacher Gender and Student Academic Achievements: From the Perspective of Teacher-student Gender Matches

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ACCORDING to existing research findings, there is a significant gender difference in student academic performance at the basic education level, with girls outperforming boys on average. Student educational attainments are affected by multiple factors. Among all school-related factors, teachers have been viewed as the most impactful in student academic progress. In China, female teachers predominate in the basic education teacher staff. Therefore, the investigation of how teacher-student gender matches impact student academic performance is of theoretical and practical significance.

This study sourced data from China Education Panel Survey (CEPS) to research into the impact of teacher-student gender matches on student academic achievements and the underlying mechanism, based on the random assignment of teachers within the school. Research subjects were 8th graders in the CEPS, and their grade-seven academic results in the baseline survey were used as the control condition. Research findings showed that:

- Teacher-student gender matches had no impact on male students' school results but posed positive influences on those of female students, represented by the favorable impact of female teachers on girl students' academic progress. Moreover, as opposed to previous research, this study found that the influence of teacher-student gender matches was restricted to the subject of English.
- The positive impact of teacher-student gender matches on girl students' performance was more remarkable among the disadvantaged group (with lower cognitive competence, rural Hukou, and non-key urban schools), likely due to their higher degrees of sensitivity to teacher characteristics such as gender because of less education input from their families.
- Causal analysis showed that female teachers tended to offer more academic and emotional support to girls than to boys, making themselves a beneficial factor in girls' academic advancement.

The implications of this study include that the rising proportion of female teachers in basic education has no potential adverse impact on boy students' education attainments; that more attention should be paid to under-

privileged students in the distribution of educational resources; and that teacher in-service training should place an emphasis on the development of supportive teacher-student relationships in order to improve class interaction and student evaluation.

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