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The paper " Middle School Girls and Cliques " is a perfect example of an essay on sociology. Against the nature of their sex, today's schoolgirls are " no longer" nice. Their roles as a community member rival those of boys in the acts of violence, hate, and aggression. This trend has evoked great concern for parents, school administrators, and policymakers alike. The poor choices they make are the result of the environment, and the girls attitude towards socialization processes. Prevalence of violence in society has given rise to the development of aggression at an early age, which adolescent girls consider as a way to gain social acceptance. One type of socialization that breeds conflict is the formation of cliques among middle school girls. This tendency reflects the trend of gangs among boys, which has often resulted in social isolation and exclusion. For these reasons, the researcher is of the view that it is important to address the problem at the administrative level as well as a policy level at schools.

Middle School Girls

Middle school girls refer to individuals at schools undergoing a transformation from childhood to adulthood. They are adolescents growing in character, exploring their environment through bonding, self-differentiation, and sexual orientation. Among middle school girls, peers influence their cognitive process information, identity, expression, feelings, interests, and experience of adulthood. Their focus begins to transform from parents to friends and acquaintances as a primary point of references. It is at this stage that they develop intimate relationships with others of the same or opposite sex. Relationships are characterized by loyalty, trust, mutual understanding and working through conflict. Girls at this stage have a less extensive number of intimate circles but they depend on their friends for <https://assignbuster.com/3-page-overview-of-a-powerpoint-presentation-to-be-done-later-on-school-conflict-for-a-graduate-education-class/>

emotional and social support (OReilly, Penn, and Demarrais (2001, p. 216). Middle school girls are also gradually becoming socially conscious of their positions and roles in society. Being popular is crucial to their psychological sense of self. They also need to be attuned to others emotionally in order to become "connected" (OReilly, Penn and Demarrais 2001, p. 216)

Cliques

Cliques are small social groups or gang in schools. In a clique, girls would form a friendship based on exclusive bonding of specific criteria. The individuals joined by the membership on the rigid boundary of maintenance with a hierarchical structure and a dominant leader. Cliques are often formed among young girls as in an activity club with special characteristics and understanding among the members. Girls in cliques often deny they are in a clique but they can be recognized by the hierarchy of the group members, the class, club or neighborhood they belong to. A clique is usually associated with members with popularity (Besag 2006, p. 65).

Girls and Cliques

In middle schools, cliques are formed at the beginning of the school year based on closely knitted bonding of new and old students at the beginning of the school term. There are fewer chances for new entrants to be part of a clique once established which usually result in social exclusion and isolation among adolescents. Among girls, cliques are formed based on their social standing, social acceptance, or popularity in school. It reflects the pubs, social, political and sport settings that adult women go-to for entertainment.

Girls often adopt activities that they ascertain from social situations, soaps, <https://assignbuster.com/3-page-overview-of-a-powerpoint-presentation-to-be-done-later-on-school-conflict-for-a-graduate-education-class/>

media entertainment, and social centers in their neighborhood (Besag 2006, p. 65).

Impact on Schools

Cliques encourage social exclusion in schools and make the experience of adulthood difficult to transition to. The self-exclusion and informal groupings usually impact on permanent disciplinary behavior. When peers encourage exclusion, they often leave the victim vulnerable emotionally. In the long run, cliques also undermine confidence in adulthood. While earlier generations dealt with problems of exclusion by turning the negative emotions inward, today the trend is of the opposite. Girls are often seen to demonstrate violence and aggression when they are victimized. They turn their underachievement or dissatisfaction of their social environment to aggressive behavior by bullying or creating uncaring attitudes towards others. These coping strategies result in conflict among school girls and undermine their emotional and social characters (Osler and Vincent 2003, p. 170; Prothrow-Stith and Spivak 2005).

Conclusion

To deal with the problem of cliques, policymakers need to identify the link between aggression and cliques, to recognize the girl's tendency to attach to certain groups. They need to encourage groups to create long-lasting bonding, and not limited to compartmentalized socialization. In cases of aggressive behavior, it would be useful to develop a support system and alternate educational provision for young adults with difficult social situations. They need to be internalized to disrupt their aggressive behavior.

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Moreover, social exclusion should be discouraged among girls and attempt should be made to connect them with some form of groups without seeming enforced upon them (Osler and Vincent 2003, p. 170; Prothrow-Stith and Spivak 2005).