

Do children learn better in single sex schools essay

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Single sex education pertains to the method of teaching whereby girls and boys are segregated from each other and taught differently and separately. This is in the belief that this educational reform will actually help students perform better academically than they actually do in school. The other form and more traditional method of schooling is co-educational where students are placed in one room and learn together regardless of gender. Single sex education does not necessarily improve a student's scholastic performance, but there is substantiation that segregating girls and boys lead to gender stereotypes and sexism.

Advocates of single sex schools claim that girls taught in an all-girls school take more risks when it comes to answering teachers' questions when in the company of the same sex, rather than when in the presence of the opposite sex. As a result, some girls tend to explore more subjects that are male-dominated such as Science, Math, and Technology (Bronson). This allows girls to focus more on their studies as social distractions are removed (Stanberry).

Single sex education proponents also assert that teachers are better able to teach students belonging to the same gender than in a mixed setting. They claim teachers know how a particular gender learns and reacts to information considering that boys and girls learn differently. For instance, girls are said to learn faster in warmer temperature classrooms, while boys absorb information better when in a cooler environment (Stanberry).

Advocates also contend that gender segregation discourages stereotyping because without the presence of the opposite sex, students are free to become themselves and explore their interests, which may sometimes be

deemed as too masculine (for girls) or too feminine (for boys). As a result, students enjoy their interests, are able to express their creative and academic pursuits without prejudice, and become more confident about themselves and their abilities (Stanberry).

However, all these claims do not have a solid basis especially when it comes to the educational achievement of boys and girls. There is not enough proof that one form of educational system is better than the other, (Mael et al., 2005, p. 83), whether it is in educational or “ socio-emotional development” (Mael et al., 2005, p. 86) as studies showed a leaning towards single sex education to no differences between both methods of education. In fact, there are no specific studies that say there is a disparity between boys and girls in terms of how their brains work, their behavior, interests, and learning abilities, but rather an overlap on their academic, behavioral, and physiological performance.

For instance, the claim that girls do better in class in single sex schools is false. Typically, classrooms where there are a higher number of girls than boys accounts for “ better academic performance for all students” (Stanberry). This is true for both elementary and high school classes. An economist and professor at the Eitan Berglas School of Economics in Tel Aviv, Professor Analia Schlosser, surmises that the higher female ratio “ lowers the amount of classroom disruption and fosters a better relationship between all students and the teacher” (Stanberry). In the same light, the American Council of Education (ACE) stresses that there is not much of a difference between educational performance of boys and girls overall regardless if they study in single sex schools or in coed schools. However,

education and achievement gap are more apparent in students coming from various cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. Thus, for the ACE, studying how these minority poor students can bridge the educational gap “deserves more attention than does the gender divide” (Stanberry).

In terms of understanding how to approach male or female students, this is another false claim because not all teachers receive formal training on how “to use gender-specific teaching techniques” (Stanberry). However, through experience working as a teacher and observing how students think, react, and approach learning, educators become skilled in adapting various teaching styles in the classroom to accommodate the different types of students.

Single sex educational environments encourage gender stereotypes and sexism. This is because boys and girls do not spend more time with each other, including working and learning with and from each other. Strauss reveals in Rebecca Bigler and Lise Elliot’s article, *The Pseudoscience of Single-Sex Schooling*, that, “Boys who spend more time with other boys become increasingly aggressive [while] girls who spend more time with other girls become more sex-typed” (Strauss). They develop narrow skill sets and in terms of understanding the opposite sex, they become less sympathetic of each others’ needs. In some instances, it also increases one gender’s belief that they are better than the other one, instead of learning to co-exist and benefit from each other.

Coeducation is better than single sex schools because it encourages boys and girls to develop a good understanding about the opposite sex, thus, they learn to trust, cooperate, and sympathize with each other rather than fight

with each other. Girls can teach boys what they are good at, and vice-versa. Therefore, schools must take advantage of the benefits of coeducation to ensure that children grow up ready for the future.

Works Cited

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