

Girls and single sex education: Perceived advantages and/or disadvantages from the teachers' perspective.

California Lutheran University

Graduate School of Education
Department of Learning and Teaching

The Problem

An ongoing debate is whether single-sex schools provide advantages that make this a preferable choice. As a result of this debate, there have been countless studies that have researched this question. This study provides a unique view of this debate by looking at single-sex schooling for girls through the lens of a teacher.

Purpose of the Study

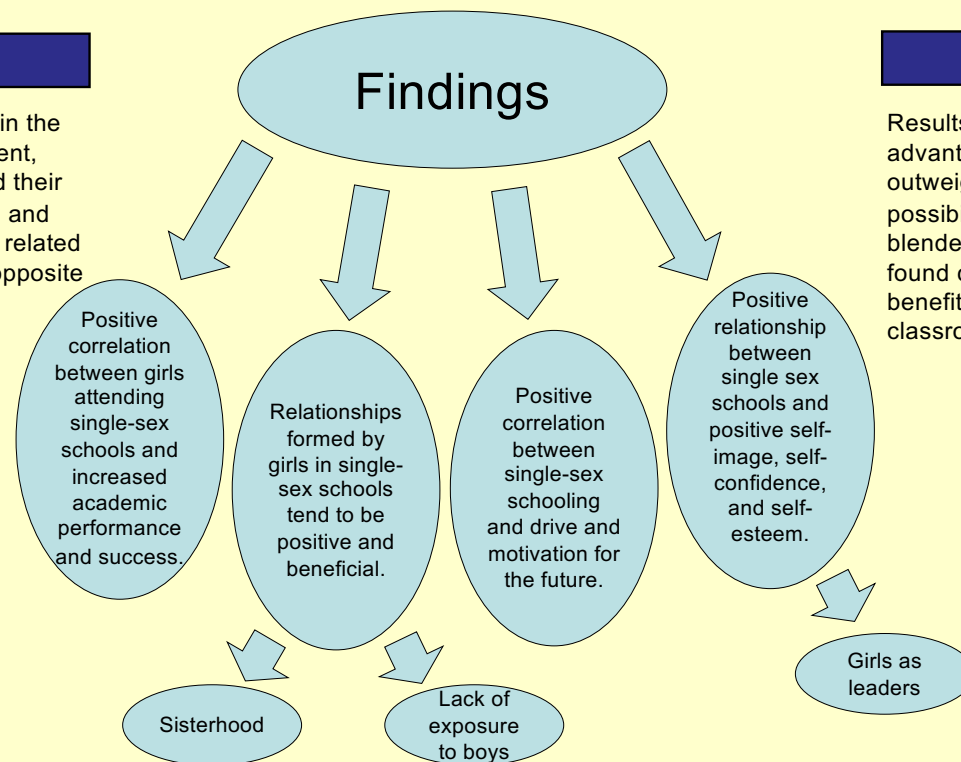
The purpose of this mixed methods research study was to discover the advantages and/or disadvantages of single gender education for middle school and high school students that attend an all-girls school. Specifically, the study answered the research question: What are teacher perceptions of the advantages and or/disadvantages of an all-girl middle school and high school setting?

Methodology

This study used a mixed methods, phenomenological research design, with the phenomenon being the absence of boys. Surveys were used for all participants and consisted of a Likert rating scale. Interviews were conducted as well and open-ended questions were asked.

Results

Research results found four main findings in the areas of academic success and achievement, relationships girls form with each other and their teachers, future goals beyond high school, and self-image. Three themes were also found related to a sisterhood, a lack of exposure to the opposite sex, and girls as leaders.



Implications

Results from this study suggest that the advantages of single-sex education for girls far outweigh the disadvantages. It leads to the possibility of future research that might find a blended solution where the one disadvantage found can be eliminated and girls can solely benefit from the many advantages of a single-sex classroom.