Annotated Bibliography

Do Students Learn Better In Single-Sex Or Coed Schools?

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Rhet 105: Research Paper

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Working Thesis: No clear evidence has come about whether or not single-sex or coed schools produce better learning outcomes, therefore I believe that parents should allow their students to choose whether or not they want to be in a coeducational or single-sex setting.


This article talks about the rise of single-sex schools despite the lack of evidence that constitute whether being in single-sex or coeducational school lead to a academic or psychological outcomes. Bigler and Signorella review the history of single-sex education within the U.S. and talk about what led to its rise. After, they review the “ideological and methodological controversies in the field”. Finally they conclude with summarizing the eight empirical studies that appear throughout the issue. They then describe the benefactions of the studies to a “body of work” that they hope will influence and make aware of educational practice and its policies, around in educational institutions.

This is a good article to use for my research paper because it gives background information of the topic and discusses why the issue is being imposed and the challenges it brings. It also talks about the money that is being put through being in a single-sex school (funds needed). It gives specific Acts that provoke the want of single sex schools as well as the challenges as to why it would not be a right fit. It is a good source because it also takes into consideration of other studies conducted. This article is leading “pro-

In this article, Booth and Nolen discuss the experiment and the role of nature explain the fact that women are reluctant to participate in competition. They use a controlled experiment by taking students under the age of 15 and attend public single-sex and coeducational schools. During their research, they have two questions in mind, “Does the gender of composition of the group to which a student is randomly assigned affect competitive choices?” and “Does the gender mix of the school a student attends affect competitive choices?” They found that girls from single-sex schools act more like boys even when they were assigned randomly to mixed-sex groups. This further proves the stigma that the average female avoids competition behavior, more than males. It also suggests that observing gender difference might reflect the social learning aspect rather than gender traits.

This is a good source to use because although it explains more of the social differences in females, it helps me further understand why people may think single-sex or coeducational schools are an idea to invest in. The source is also scholarly. It has been peer reviewed as well. They give background information pertaining to woman in the workforce and behavioral traits. They pose questions and attempt to solve why it is the
way it is. They give facts and statistics and they even question the students in the experiment. This assists me on answering my thesis.


Flowers discusses her opinion about being in single-sex education and the benefits she has personally encountered. Her main idea that she tries to get across is that she never had to worry about distractions. She was in a single-sex education setting for 16 years. She states, “It's simply that schools are designed for academics, not as social clubs”. This is one of her main points to why she prefers being in a single-sex institution. Earlier, she explained how she does believe in integrating at parties, sports events and of course, being married. However, she states that being in a classroom with the opposite sex not only provokes distraction, but worry as well. At the end she states that single-sex institutions preserves the value of the gender.

It is a good source to use because it gives not only personal insight, but as well as commentary pertaining to why Flowers does not think that integrating is bad either. Although the article is not recent, (2005) it does influence thinking to our generation now. The reason why is because with our generation in the midst of new technology and social apps, thinking is ensued. With this, it will fit into my argument in the paper by giving me a form of biased opinion. Although I agree with how she explains why it is better to have
single-sex education, I personally feel that the integrated approach stimulates growth within developing children, k-12, and beyond.


The authors discuss the social impacts that single-sex education poses in the U.S. They believe that there is not clear evidence in single-sex and sex-segregated education might exaggerate gender stereotypes as well as sexism. Throughout their research, they talk about the lack of evidence that single-sex schooling generates better educational outcomes than coeducational schooling. They go into “brain research” pointing out that “boys learn differently than girls.” They then go back to the statement and state that it “reflects misinformation about neurobehavioral science.” They talk about misconceptions regarding single-sex and co-educational schooling as well.

Given that the source is biased, they believe that single-sex schools have no impact on better educational outcomes, this is a good source because they offer rebuttals. They know what they are talking about because they bring up Title IX of the U.S. Education Amendments of 1972, and how it affects how people view the topic. They bring in other research made by others and discuss how they view it. It helps me question how I view the topic and challenges my own beliefs as well.

Gnezda talks about choosing the right school for one’s children. She provides insight on commonly asked questions regarding supporting single-sex education as well as coed education. She states, “It's true that research findings fail to provide direct evidence about whether a single-sex or coed school is better, but research has produced findings about school quality”. Although it does not seem to answer whether single-sex or coed is better, it does provide a sense of comfort. She later explains that the education that is being explored and thought into, is for the child, not the parent. She also mentions that not every school will have everything that is desired, but to look for outside resources to compensate for “lost” resources.

This is not a valuable source because although Gnezda is rather providing support to choose between a single-sex education or coed education, this instills thought and makes me question if what I held for a belief is worth rooting for, so to speak. This article is not detailed, rather vague. It does help with trying to understand both sides of the argument.


Long examines the evidence of nonrandom gender sorting in schools K-12 within the United States. He states, “The sorting exists among coed schools and at all grade levels, and it is highest in the secondary school grades” They point out gender sorting “across school sectors and types”, where, for instance, males are said to be underrepresented in privates schools and charters schools. However, they are
overrepresented in irregular public schools. Long talks about how gender sorting is prevalent and that it appears tone highest within the private schools and irregular public schools. He then says that it occurs even when parents have similar presences for what they want in a school for their children.

This source is useful to my research with the topic because it provides what gender sorting can do. Mark Long is an associate professor in the Evans School of Public Affairs and also an associate professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Washington. It is a scholarly source as well as trust worthy because he points out the Title IX amendments and how it has effected the topic. He provides tables with statistics and explains what they mean. This will influence my research to provide information on how single-sex schools provide little to no effect on students.


This article is an argumentative article. They open up by stating, “Some experts say you can learn better when the opposite sex isn't around. Others argue that coed schools prepare you for the real male-female world. What do you think?” They then have two sections, one called “Single-sex Schools Put Focus on Learning” and “Or Single-Sex Schools aren't a Solution” In the first section it mentions the clashes that girls and boys have different learning styles and it tends to be an obstacle for progressing academically. Later, McCollum mentions the fact that single-sex schools encourages adolescents to break down the traditional gender roles. In the second section, he provides a rebuttal to why single-sex schools may not be the solution. He offers student
insight on why they think coed schools are better. The student mentions, “Girls might have a very different take than the boys, say, on (author) Virginia Woolf, and it might challenge my way of thinking.” Hence the rest of the information is how coed stipulates educational participation.

This is a good article to use for my research because it is a biased article. It leans toward the pro single-sex education argument. They give arguments on how it is beneficial to students despite grades and it challenges what I believe in. It helps me conclude with what I am trying to bring out by providing statistics. It is also helpful that the article contains a rebuttal to his argument as well.


Robinson and Smithers look at the topic of separation both academic and social advantages. They seek out to GCES to test the affects of being in a coed and single sex environment to 100 sample students. This happens in the students second term at the university, for balance of sex and the type of school. They do mention the great performance of single sex schools but give facts to back up why, in this case, academic selection, socioeconomic background and the standing of the school and how it views segregation of the sexes. In the end, it states, “When, as far as possible, like is compared with like, the apparent academic differences between single-sex and co-educational schools largely disappear”. There seemed to be no “ease-of- transition” advantages but
coed schools received stronger support socially, hence moving away from single-sex institutions are on the rise.

This is a good source because unlike other sources, it is not a biased article. It includes actual research to provide at least understanding of why it may or may not be better. The source gives reasonable and logical facts that were put forth with examining the students. Although it does not have a provide biased take, it does not make me contemplate on my belief of the topic, rather enforce, even if that means that the research given may have turned away from what I wanted to be shown or proven.