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# Gender Stereotyping by Regular vs. Special Education Teachers

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Gender Stereotyping by Regular vs. Special Education Teachers

Annie Eyer

Prepared in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the  
Masters of Arts Degree in Multicategorical Special Education

Governors State University

Spring 2015

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Running Head: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS GENDER

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**Abstract**

This study explores the teacher perceptions of gender roles held by regular education teacher as opposed to special education teachers. The purpose of the study is to examine the differences in responses held by these two groups of teachers. An online quantitative, longitudinal survey was distributed to teachers in the Illinois Counties of Will and Cook. A quantitative analysis discovered no statistically significant differences between the two certification groups. However, the teachers free response questions obtained mixed results between all teachers surveyed. Future implications of the research suggest that the teacher preparation programs need better focus on the study of gender differences within education and school environments.

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

“That children exhibit problems in the classroom is a fact of day-to-day school existence” (Waguespack and Moore, 1993, p. 153). However, the definition of an aberrant behavior and the intervention used or not used differ across communities, schools, settings, and, along with the focus of this study, teachers (Safran & Safran, 1985). Stereotypes found in general society are known to be mirrored in the attitudes and expectations of numerous teachers. The discussion of gender differences arise in many facets of American life, however, there is little research in the differences of perceptions of gender roles had by regular education teachers as opposed to special education educators (Tatar & Emmanuel, 2001).

In today’s society, gender role inequalities have become viewed as deplorable (Spitz & Huber, 1980). However, appropriate or inappropriate behaviors displayed by any gender are greatly context-based and most behavioral disturbances come from the interaction between the student and its environment. Environment including the teacher and their perceptions (Algozzine, 1980).

Researchers have found that teachers display differential behaviors toward their male and female students. The differential behaviors are often the result of teacher perceptions and attitudes toward their students' gender roles, which mirror prevailing societal stereotypes. Despite indications that teacher perception of gender roles is one of the most influential factors concerning teacher differential behaviors and educational discrepancies (Tatar & Emmanuel, 2001, pg. 215).

Therefore, a teacher's tolerance and perception about student behavior is critical in classifying classroom behavior as appropriate or inappropriate (Algozzine, 1980). Since special education teachers receive further training in behavioral issues, it is questioned that they would have a different perception on gender roles within the classroom and in daily living.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Gender bias occurs in everyday life and oftentimes without the knowledge of the offender or offended. Scantlebury (2009, p.6) defines gender bias as "when people make assumptions regarding behaviors, abilities or preferences of others based upon their gender. Because there are strong gender role stereotypes for masculinity and femininity, students who do not match them can encounter problems with teachers and with their peers." These inconsistencies found in classrooms have a profound impact on the standards students set in other facets of their daily lives.

A teacher's management can cause stereotypic expectations for learners and their role in the classroom. Therefore, an educator's unknown (or known) bias can cause unnecessary problems within the classroom and in the student's personal lives. For example, Renold believes that behaviors such as these towards students "can extend to their response to students who challenge their authority. Such risk-taking behavior in boys is expected and at times praised, but assertiveness in girls is viewed negatively and labeled unfeminine. Similarly, boys who do not exhibit stereotypic masculine behaviors may be ridiculed" (Renold, 2006).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to discover the differences in gender perceptions of regular and special education teachers. It also focuses on the level of bias the teacher is aware of regarding gender differences and how they organize and deliver educational material in their own classroom. Included in the study are also questions regarding their outlook on gender issues in society and educational institutions as well as the roles gender play in daily and functional living. The main purpose of this study is establish a correlation between proper education in behavior issues and gender stereotyping. It aims to provide an insight on the necessity for establishing proper higher education of all teaching professionals in prejudice-free behavior management for the classroom.

### **Questions of the Study**

This study will focus on the following questions: Does the gender of a student influence the manner in which the teacher handles the problem behavior? Do teachers accept certain behaviors from students based upon their gender? Do the stereotypes associated with a student's gender play a role in classroom management? Does the perceptions of gender in society influence classroom management? Should gender roles be explored further in education?

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

Some assumptions within this study are that the participants will respond truthfully to the surveys given. It is also assumed that there will be a significant amount of responses to both categories of education to the surveys distributed. The study also assumed that the teachers and educators have worked with both male and female students

in their career and have interacted with them in issues such as behavior, discipline, praise and basic instruction.

Limitations include the method of gathered information being in survey format having weak validity (Colorado State, 2007). Also, the researcher being a female educator, there may be unknown researcher bias when deciphering the findings of the survey (Cresswell, 2003). Another limitation is the boundary in which the survey was distributed was within only one state and not nationwide. Within the sample size there is a small number of male teacher responses which may have skewed the responses. Also, the questions on the perceptions of teacher may not provide a valid representation of teachers' decisions made within their own classroom. A teacher's rulings and choices can be impulsively triggered by the dynamic and unpredictable environment of a classroom (Fang, 1996).

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in the fact that it may help teachers take a mindful look at the choices they make in their classrooms daily. Decisions regarding behavior, praise, classroom management, work quality and expectations may be affected by the teacher's gender bias. This study aims to shine a light on those unconscious prejudices and aid in the teachers role in passing those biases on to their students. "Within the classroom, these biases unfold in students' practices and teachers' acceptance of certain behaviors from one student or another based upon the students' gender" (Scantlebury, 2006, p. 8).

Therefore, this study also targets to guide future generations of falling victim to the unconscious bias of gender profiling. It also aims to display the difference, if any, between special educators and regular education teacher's perceptions of gender. With

this information, we may be able to realize a link between these bias' and higher education programming and aid in enlightening all teachers of gender issues before they enter the classroom.

### **Definitions of Terms**

**Behavior.** That portion of an organism's interaction with its environment that is characterized by detectable displacement in space through time of some part of the organism and that results in a measurable change in at least one aspect of the environment. What people do or say (Cooper, 1987).

**Gender Stereotyping.** These are one-sided and exaggerated images of men and women which are deployed repeatedly in everyday life. They are found commonly in the mass media because they operate as a widely understood shorthand. Sociologists often see stereotyping as part of the process by which children are socialized into sex roles and by which adults and children are denied opportunities for more individually varied development (Marshall, 1998).

### **Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this study is to determine the differences, if any, between regular and special education teachers when it comes to gender perceptions. This study focuses on the level of predisposition the instructor is aware of regarding their personal opinions on gender variances and how they establish and deliver instruction in their classroom.

This study may aid professional in taking a conscious look at decisions regarding instruction and student behavior and aid future generations in falling victim to uninformed decisions within their classrooms.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of the Literature**

Shepardson and Pizzini (1992) believe that societal stereotypes are imitated in the expectations and opinions of most teachers. Inequalities and gender segregation beginning at a young age are thought to contribute to women earning low-wages, high unemployment rate and restricted access to higher positions within the job setting (Couppie & Epiphane, 2002).

### **Gender in Education**

Educational data has found that elementary girls perform equal to or higher than their male peers on almost every level. However, once reaching secondary school and college, boys have pulled ahead in almost all academic levels (Sadker, 1994). Even though girls are receiving better grades than boys, it is found that more females than males believe that they are not capable of succeeding at college-level work (Bartholomew & Shnorr, 2000). Which correlates well with John Holland's Theory of Career Choice (1973) which states that people select or reject their college majors or career goals based on their own self-image. Therefore, gender-role socialization has a great impact on the futures of students based on the confidence in their abilities and self-esteem established at a young age through the education they receive (Bartholomew & Shnorr, 2000).

An examination of third grade students found that girls define their own feminine characteristics in direct relation to boys. Within the study, the classroom was self-divided into four groups. Through interviews with the girls, it was found that the majority of the groups defined themselves and the other 'girl groups' in regards to male characteristics. The 'nice girls' believe they were the opposite of boys; quiet, nice, and polite. Tomboys

played sports and games with the boys and wore “boy colors.” The ‘girly group’ wrote love letters, and flirted with the boys in their class. While the ‘spice girls’ rated the boys in the class and embraced girl power and independence from boys. (Reay, 2001). Reay believes that this study means that the socialization of gender comes from the tolerance of some behaviors over others by teachers and parents.

### **Teacher Perceptions on Gender**

In their 1992 study, Shepardson and Pizzini found that teachers at the elementary school levels consider boys to be more capable in mental and abstract operation which include, but are not limited to: a) analyzing, b) synthesizing, c) hypothesizing, d) evaluating, e) interpreting, and f) questioning. They found girls to be more task oriented, specifically in regards to: a) observing, b) measuring, c) communicating, d) graphing, and e) manipulating equipment and materials. Sadker & Sadker (1994) found that “sitting in the same classroom, reading the same textbook, listening to the same teacher, boys and girls receive very different educations.”

Teachers are often unaware of gender biases that they hold and do not deem certain classroom management strategies as having anything to do with gender stereotyping. Gender inequalities, instruction, and certain teaching behaviors are overlooked because teachers are purely teaching how they were taught when they were in school (Chapman, 2015).

Scantlebury finds that teachers use certain gender expectations within their classroom management techniques. In order to keep control of their classrooms noise level and distractions, a teacher may sit an unruly boy at a table of girls, for example. In older grades, teachers may use the expectancy of a girls nurturing characteristics and pair

them with a student who needs extra assistance with truancy, classroom distractions discipline or help in a certain subject. It is her belief that “the expectation is that boys naturally exhibit boisterous, unruly behavior, are academically able, rational, and socially uncommunicative, whereas girls are quiet, polite, and studious. Girls are also expected to possess better social skills than boys and to excel at reading and the language arts. So girls who present discipline problems for teachers, or quiet, studious boys, may encounter a lack of understanding from peers and teachers.”

On the other hand, Beaman, Wheldall and Kemp (2006) state that gender has significant implications on development in many areas. Physiologically and through tradition, humans has created a set of expectations for males and females which are unique to each gender and have great influence on the way we treat them. Due to these socialization observations, we also find another set of expectations for males and females behavior. It has been found that, no matter what the gender of the adult, girls tend to fit into behavior expectations of adults more easily. Which, in turn, allows for girls to fit into the student role more naturally. Since girls may be more likely to be able to hold attention for longer periods of time and can stay still for longer periods of time, they can succeed in a traditional classroom more easily than boys. Since boys learn and are more motivated to move, they may be deemed more disruptive in class, and in turn, receive more negative attention from teachers and other students (Cameron, Kaufman & Brock, 2009).

Females, especially at the elementary school level, are found to receive less positive attention and praise from their teachers (Bailey, 1992). “When different behaviors are tolerated for boys than for girls because 'boys will be boys', schools are perpetuating the oppression of females. There is some evidence that girls are becoming

more academically successful than boys, however examination of the classroom shows that girls and boys continue to be socialized in ways that work against gender equity” (Chapman, 2015). Over the years, the lack of attention and uneven distribution of time, may cause confidence issues in young girls which lead to discrepancies between males and females when it comes to career and personal choices. The gender bias found in educational settings are commonplace and causes very few people to speak out on imbalanced treatment (Sadker, 1994).

In high school, few women with disabilities are found to participate in school-based or community-based employment, which may hinder their exposure to future career or post-secondary networks (Doren et al, 2012). School-to-work transition programs are found to be almost always in favor of young men. Which is why gender differences are apparent in the labor force. Women do not prepare for jobs in the same manner as men, therefore, they do not enter the same occupations. This disparity is said to be caused by many factors including gender roles, culture, structural effects and mainly differences in their educational orientation (Couppie & Epiphane, 2002). Males and females are continuing to receive separate and unequal educations in all grade levels. This is caused mainly by gender socialization and every day curriculum choices which favor males. Unless educators become mindful of gender stereotyping and gender socialization issues, they will continue to inadvertently provide their students with these impairing views. Girls will continue to obtain a discriminatory education until this issue is addressed (Chapman, 2015).

### **The Students Perspective**

Dr. Cynthia S. Mee explored gender identity in the eyes of students. She asked the students to write and answer from their own perspective when answering over fifty open ended statements exploring questions such as, “The best thing about my gender, the worst thing about my gender, and the biggest difference between the sexes”. These prompts were used to begin a dialogue in the middle school setting. This format allowed for students to respond within a peer based session. The first prompt to be explored was “The best thing about my gender”. The “fifth through eighth grade girls’ demonstrated hesitancy and difficulty when responding to this statement during the class dialogue”, while the boys were “eager to respond”. Unfortunately, the girls were reluctant to answer this prompt, while the boys were comfortable expressing their views. “The responses that the boys were so quick to give fell under two categories: “We can do more things” and, most common, “Not being a girl.” The most common responses from the girls were, the “I don’t know” and “Nothing”.

The next prompt elicited a more vocal contribution from the girls, while the boys were more subdued. The prompt “The worst thing about my gender”. Girls now had a lot to say. Some examples of their responses include: “: Don't get to have short hair. Don't know. I don't get to do boy things. Men don't think we can do anything. Guys take advantage of us”. Boys, on the other hand responded with, “Nothing, it's awesome. Puberty comes slow. Different thoughts. We are always at fault. Nothing like being a boy. There isn't one. I am not real strong”.

This part of the study found that:

Both the boys and the girls thought that boys can do more, are viewed as better, have different expectations, and have different restrictions. The boys thought of themselves as having a great deal to enjoy just by being a boy. They found little problem with being a boy and saw the biggest difference between the sexes as biological, with different biological restrictions and expectations (Mee, 1995, p.4).

The study concluded that the worst thing that instructors can do is be complacent and pretend that problems do not exist. Gender issues are a reality and children need to depend on educators to help them understand the discoveries they are making about themselves as they travel through adolescence.

This study gave several recommendations to teachers to help alleviate some of the problems middle school students face in their daily school experience including: model behavior that “encourage gender equitable behaviors”; modify the curriculum to “address equity issues in the school”; make sure that students are represented in their studies by linking “their learning environment to their living environment”; provide mentoring opportunities; encourage study and growth in areas that individual students find interesting; “Teach media literacy and critical viewing skills”; make sure that language is “gender inclusive”; make sure women and men are equally studied and that the visuals in the classroom are equal as well; provide solid leadership. Some could be easily implemented and other were more difficult. Dr. Mee stresses, “Let us help our children break down harmful stereotypes so they can build new, more positive models” (p.2).

### **Workforce Implications**

The majority of low-paying occupations, such as retail and administrative work, are still dominated by women while men hold the majority of high-paying and respected positions (Ehrhart & Sandler, 1987). Women are also more likely to include stereotypical expectations into their career decisions when it comes to choosing an occupation (Bartholomew & Shnorrr, 2000). For example, mathematics has long been a male-dominated field and the stereotyping of mathematics as a “boy thing,” may hinder some women’s contact to math-orientated occupations at a young age (Sherman, 1983). “It is a network of sex-role influences which makes mathematics, and the careers mathematics are needed in, appear incongruent with the female role” (p.342).

Therefore, for women to succeed in mathematics-based careers, they must not only fight the stereotypical response from the field and find math valuable and math careers suitable. They must first find the self-confidence to pursue a mathematics career at all (Bartholomew & Shnorrr, 2000). However, through Sherman’s study of high school students, he found that males have more confidence in their mathematics ability; while females actually tested higher than males in mathematics. This is yet another factor in which self-esteem, confidence and gender identity are used in choosing a career (Sherman, 1983).

In 2005, Wagner and Cardoso found that women with disabilities have the most difficult time finding employment after they have aged out of school programs. The gender gap between males and females with disabilities also is apparent when it comes to many different facets of employment. These women claim fewer hours and lower employment rates, especially when it comes to full-time work and make an average of

five thousand dollars less than males per year (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Garza, & Levine, 2005).

Women with disabilities also have substantial obstacles finding post-secondary education programs as well as important job training in comparison to their male counterparts. As a direct result, these women participate in lower-skilled occupations (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009). Rojewski (2005) found that women with disabilities restrict their potential occupations at a young age which may be correlated to stereotypical gender roles exhibited or taught to them. They have low expectations for their future careers which lead to avoiding nontraditional or respected jobs.

Eccles believes that choosing a career has much more to do with family responsibilities than self-esteem. Within choosing careers, women are more likely to place emphasis on family considerations, especially those fashioned as their responsibility such as child-rearing and maintenance of the home. Women with these traditional views, tend to choose jobs which are low-responsibility, flexible, low-paying, and widely available. This allows them to accommodate their husband's career and keep up with the household while still contributing financially (Eccles, 1987).

### **Gender Studies in Racial and Ethnic Areas**

The National Assessment of Educational Progress explored various tests administered in the United States educational system which "raise some questions about educational equity that transcend the issue of gender fairness". The study found females score higher overall and take more rigorous classes at the high school level notwithstanding other variants such as race and ethnic group. It detailed a statistical gap that varies from a small percentage to a slightly higher percentage depending on the groups

studied. It should be noted that this study does not represent the U. S, student population, but only explores the “gender differences presented ... in a sample of high school students who intended to enroll in college”. For example, high school students that choose to take Advanced Placement classes transcends ethnic and racial groups and consistently found that “over the last decade, across all ethnic groups, more females have taken Advanced Placement examinations than males” (Coley, 2001).

The courses that the different genders took, however, were significantly biased; “males were overwhelmingly represented in computer science and physics courses in 1999, while females were much more likely to take French language and psychology courses”. Also the study noted that males “scored higher”. These statistics identify gender and course selection do not suggest that there “is no systematic disenfranchisement of students of either sex, although traditional gender differences in both course selection and subject-specific achievement persist”, however a “substantial race and ethnicity gap” is evident “with the completion rate for whites at twenty-eight percent; blacks, sixteen percent; and Hispanics, ten percent”. These statistics suggest that although there are some variants in gender differences, the more pressing issue is how to impact the successful completion of studies in racial and ethnic areas. The study concludes that is “more important for educators to assess the strengths and weaknesses of students individually” as opposed to grouping them by gender, ethnicity, and race to fully assess each students capabilities and then use that information to eliminate the inequities in education (Coley, 2001, p.4).

### **Cultural Expectations**

Today, the majority of young girls plan to enter positions that are currently dominated by women. Which is believed to be reasoned by the gender-role stereotypes found in today's culture. Especially, the differences in expectations between men and women. According to Bem (2000), for women, "society emphasizes physical attractiveness, nurturance, sensitivity and dependence," while for men, society emphasizes "dominance, achievement-oriented, rational and assertive" qualities (Bartholomew & Schnorr, 2000, p.13). Young women who have disabilities are especially susceptible to low-self-esteem and a lack of self-confidence. This is shown to correlate to a lower rate of engagement in society and social situations (Doren & Benz, 1998).

Through studies of young children outside of the United States, we do not see a statistical difference in how they are viewed. Albi (2010) says that these expectation "may not be culture bound" (Abdi, 2010, p.5). His study investigates the gender differences in social skills, aberrant behaviors and academic levels of kindergarten age school children. Specifically, the study found that there was demonstrated "psychological distress" in students moving from a preschool atmosphere into the kindergarten school setting for both genders and the cultural and environmental backgrounds. This study differs in the approach to social competencies due to the fact that children were studied not only in the school setting, but at home as well. The participants were kindergarten children (292 girls and 318 boys) and both parents and teachers were asked to rate the social skills and behaviors of their children. It is important to note that all teacher respondents were female, while over ninety percent of the parent

survey were female as well. There was “a sample comprised of children from families with different socioeconomic status and educational backgrounds, the researcher chose twenty kindergarten centers from different sub-areas of Tehran” (p.1). making this a diverse group of children. “The intention of this study was to determine whether statistically significant differences exist on the social skills, problem behaviors and academic competence of Iranian kindergarten children as assessed by Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) Teacher and Parent Questionnaire”. The focus of the research was (a) social skill of assertion, (b) cooperation, (c) responsibility, and (d) self-control. It also details problem behaviors that include: (a) externalizing, (b) internalizing, and (e) hyperactivity. Finally, academic competence is rated as a whole.

The results of the study were not surprising. “The consistent results in scoring girls are higher than boys on social skills and lower than boys on problem behaviors identified in different cultures have theoretical importance. It implies that social skills and problem behaviors may not be culture-bound” (p.3). The study was dependent on the observations of mostly female teachers and the mothers of the participants and “gender roles expectations” could have impacted the results. The overall conclusion of the study was that more research was needed to definitively substantiate the results.

### **Gender Difference Studies**

Many studies believe that gender awareness is vital in the educational system. Boys and girls simply learn differently and they believe that because of recent trends to put a veil over gender, both genders are not receiving their best instruction in school (Kaufman, n.d.). There have been an assortment of research dedicated to the fact that

boys, in recent decades, have been achieving less at school. To which there has not yet been given one solution.

One reason to the discrepancies in learning style is believed to be the females and males, obviously, have different biological characteristics. The neurological differences may shed a light on the gender gap which is seen in boys in girls, especially at a young school age. Coates and Draves believe

boys learn differently than girls, and today's boys also learn differently than previous generations of students. Boys are actually ahead because of neurology, boys are actually ahead in leading society into the new economic age of the twenty-first century. Boys are punished for homework and grades are lower because of behavior unrelated to learning and knowledge. Smart boys turn in homework late, and this is also explained by the boy's hard wiring"

(Coates & Draves, 2006, p.6).

Which allows us to ask the question; does the gender gap have to do with teacher expectation or neurological differences? Some researchers believe that the problem dwells in teachers expectations. Rivers believes that the expectations to achieve are much lower for boys, both academically and behaviorally. Separating students by gender is not the answer either. He believes that authority figures in young boy's lives adapt to boys wants instead of their needs. The "boys will be boys" attitudes in classrooms is the problem and by changing traditional teaching strategies and create new methods to put in place, than both genders will be able to succeed in the same classroom (Rivers, 2008). "Students can learn almost any subject matter when they are taught with methods and approaches responsive to their learning style strengths" (Dunn, 1990, p. 15).

However, some believe that separation is the answer. Many parochial and private schools offer same sex schools or classrooms, but there are not many public school options. Delisio has found that today's traditional school programs do not adhere to boys learning styles and have become a hindrance on their maximum potential. Much of this has to do with the neurological way boys learn language. Males tend to be more active individuals which adhere to mechanical tasks where girls develop language at an early age which allows for a greater pull to reading and writing (Delisio, 2006). With this knowledge, many researchers believe that educational systems have put all emphasis on curriculum, which has taken the heat off of the educators directly involved. All educational practices need to be thoroughly examined and enhanced. The work gone into creating gender free school systems has only hindered both genders and has not served young men well. It is rarely taken into account that different genders are, in fact different and need the respect to be cared after as such (Cohen, 1998).

As stated above, many studies into cultural sensitivity believe that girls are at the disadvantage in school, while boys' grades continue to drop. Sadker, whose research was discussed earlier, believed that females' self-esteem was greatly compromised in the school system, due to lack of attention in the classroom. Girls are not called on as much as boys and do not receive as much positive or negative attention during the school day. However, it is found that males are the ones struggling academically. However, due to recent trends in advocacy, we put more of our research into issues that girls are facing. The U.S. Department of Education began keeping detailed statistics in the 1980s. In over twenty years of data, it found that in reading boys fall one and a half years behind girls

and are behind in all other tested areas except mathematics and science (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000).

Gurian and Stevens discuss the following statistics in their 2001 study: (a) boys account for two-thirds of learning disability diagnoses, (b) boys represent ninety percent of discipline referrals, (c) boys dominate such brain-related learning disorders as Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, with millions now medicated in schools (d) eighty percent of high school dropouts are male, (e) males make up fewer than forty percent of college students, (f) Boys earn seventy percent of D's and F's and fewer than half of the 'As. Gurian believes that schools need to develop an educational plan where it does not give disadvantage for girls, but places emphasis on reaching both boys and girls to their maximum potential. The way boys are declining in school needs to come to a halt and more attention need to be put on boys closing the reading and writing gap. He states, "We have nearly closed the math/science gender gap in education for girls by using more verbal functioning—reading and written analysis—to teach such spatial-mechanical subjects as math, science, and computer science. We now need a new movement to alter classrooms to better suit boys' learning patterns if we are to deal with the gaps in grades, discipline, and reading/writing that threaten to close many boys out of college and out of success in life" (Gurian & Stevens, 2004, p.24).

### **Differences in the Brain**

Another question research has asked is: are boys and girls brains different and does this difference place a part in their learning style? Gurian (2004) discusses in his study the physical differences in males and females brains. Positron Emission Tomography and Magnetic Resonance Imaging studies have shown structural differences

between large group samples of males and females. These differences are said to produce functional differences as well that affect human learning and retention as well as behavior.

The female brain is larger in comparison to a male's brain. This difference can be up to twenty-five percent larger when fully matured. This has to do with the girls increased tissue mass between the hemispheres of the brain. These tissues create strong neural connectors which function better than boys in comparison to their listening skills. Also, this creates more detailed memory and discrimination between tones. Experts suggest this may lead to greater ability in music, writing, and reading. Since girls have better memory storage this is helpful in subjects such as English and history. These areas of the brain which are larger, tissue wise, cause for a greater ability with verbal and emotive functioning.

This gives insight into why girls are outperforming boys in language arts, reading, and writing. Girls will especially have an easier time in early childhood due to their increase listening abilities and language skills from being able to distinguish tones. Within the scans, experts have also found that the female brain has about fifteen percent more blood flow to the center of the brain at all times. Many believe that this creates more of an interest in reading and writing because the brain becomes stimulated in these areas. This causes girls to become more interested in these areas at a young age since children gravitate towards enjoyable activities (Guarian, 2004; Rich, 2000).

As stated previously, boys tend to have more spatial-mechanical functioning in their brains. Male brains have more cortical areas and use fifty percent of the space that females use for verbal language. Boys also have less serotonin and oxytocin, these two

chemicals act as binding agents in the human body. This may be the reason why more impulsivity is found in males. The cortical areas and binding agents together might be a reason why males, in class and at work, find it more difficult to sit still. Also, since boys have less blood flow to their brain they compartmentalize learning, which makes it a little more difficult to multitask and make quick transitions. The male brain is also more easily able to go into a rest state. Since the male brain has these qualities and attributes within it, it is no surprise that they are achieving high scores in math and science and low scores in reading and writing (Guarian, 2004).

Boys tend to get pleasure from moving objects through space. Which is why hands-on learning is imperative for classroom activity and why boys choose video games and athletics for leisure activities. This also explains why men excel in occupations such as engineering or architecture. The basic reason is that humans have a drive towards experiences that give them pleasure. Since girls and boys experience pleasure differently they will have different interests and abilities (Guarian, 2004; Rich, 2000). Knowing these biological and neurological tendencies and characteristics, should provide educators with "extra encouragement to create gender specific strategies to successfully engage" their students (Guarian and Steven, 2004, p.24)

Within this study, they sampled subjects from around the world and found the same similarities within gender and the same differences between genders. This is why Guarian states that this is only a small reason why genders learn differently because culture effects on characteristics of our learning and gender roles as well. Which is why males in Spain, may differ behaviorally than those males that live in England or the United States.



New brain imaging technologies confirm that genetically templated brain patterning by gender plays a far larger role than we realized. Research into gender and education reveals a mismatch between many of our boys' and girls' learning brains and the institutions empowered to teach our children... explore some of the differences, because recognizing these differences can help us find solutions to many of the challenges that we experience in the classroom. Of course, generalized gender differences may not apply in every case (Guarian and Steven, 2004, p. 23).

The world's largest study of brain development was conducted by the National Institutes of Health in 2007. The study found that in males and females the brain develops differently in sequence, tempo and structure. The study showed "Girls reach the inflection point just before age 11 years; boys do not reach the inflection point until just before age 15 years. A young woman reaches full maturity, in terms of brain development, between 21 and 22 years of age. A young man does not reach full maturity, in terms of brain development, until nearly 30 years of age" (Sax, 2010, p. 1066). The National Institute of Health's study pointed out that the difference in brain development is much larger than that of physical height development differences. This study pointed out that between the ages of ten and twelve, where differences in physical features are becoming prominent, the differences in brain size and development are much greater. While the differences as adults are very small. Which, in turn, is comparable to studies which state that the differences between men and women are small compared to the differences between girls and boys (Lenroot, Gogtay, Greenstein, et al. 2007).

### **Differences in Learning Styles**

Brain development and growth has a significant impact on learning style in young children, especially before puberty. Most schools use age to divide children into grades, however some research suggests that the behavior expectations of different sex classrooms is larger than that of same sex grade difference. For example, expectations of seven year old girls compared to seven year old boys is larger than that of a seven year old girls and a nine year old girl. Plus, the younger the student, the bigger the difference.

The National Association for Choice in Education (2013) urges all people to visit a same sex kindergarten classroom. They state that “if you visit an all-girls kindergarten and then an all-boys kindergarten, you will be struck by how differently the children learn. If you visit an all-girls, twelfth-grade classroom and an all-boys twelfth-grade classroom, the differences are more subtle. Some six-year-old boys just have to stand and make buzzing noises in order to learn. It's unusual to find seventeen-year-old boys who absolutely have to stand and make buzzing noises in order to concentrate.” The early years are much more vital in segregation to provide the best education possible for both genders.

Educational psychology experts have found that boys tend to be more interested in material that they deem as interesting while girls are extremely concerned with pleasing adults. Therefore, students of different genders are naturally reinforced in different manners. This cause concern for the classroom teacher and his or her instruction and management techniques do to finding uniform learning behavior strategies. This also means that boys and girls fundamentally have different difficulties in the classroom, both academically and behaviorally (Pomerantz, Altermatt, & Saxon, 2002).

### **Teacher Preparation Programs**

Taking a look at teacher preparation programs and their focus on gender is key to realize that if gender bias occurs in the classroom, how college level programs plays a role in it. Sadker (2003) took a look at teacher preparation and textbooks, in regards to gender and schools. They focused on “content analysis of twenty-three leading teacher education texts to determine what they had to say about gender and education. All texts were published between 1998 and 2001, and included five areas: Introductory/ Foundations in Education, and the methods texts in Reading, Social Studies, Science and Math” going line by line to determine gender issues including: “the experiences and contributions of women (even mentioning a woman’s name) to exploring strategies to eliminate sex-role stereotyping” (Sadker, 2003, p. 3). The conclusion of the study was not surprising as their findings determined that “twenty-three teacher education texts devote only about three percent of their space to gender. In some texts, gender is not even on the radar screen” (Sadker, 2003, p. 3). This data determines that shaping our teaching profession to consider gender issues is necessary in the development of their resources to promote gender fairness and decrease bias in the classroom based on the resources used (Sadker, 2003).

The study illustrated that over the years gender bias has decreased. “Back in 1978, Mary Budd Rowe's Teaching Science as Continuous Inquiry announced that just being female was "A Special Handicap" in science. The text informed readers that girls "know less, do less, explore less, and are prone to be more superstitious than boys" (Sadker, 2003, p.11). This in itself, illustrates that harmful stereotypes were accepted theory in 1978 whereas this stereotype has lessened over the years. The study did discover,

however that “Only one math text includes a female pioneer, whose contributions are given passing mention” which, again, enforces the notion that women are less likely to be successful in the math fields. A 2000 report by the U.S. Department of Education states that “In elementary school, both males and females agree that they like and understand math and science. By the twelfth grade, however, females report less positive attitudes and consider them harder subjects than do boys” (Sadker, 2003, p. 11) demonstrating that this area of study does still have gender bias as the students continue their education (United States Department of Education, 2000).

Social Studies also depicts women in a less than optimal lens “in Elementary and Middle School Social Studies: An Interdisciplinary Instruction Approach, ten group-project ideas are suggested for a unit on the Civil War. Only one includes females, and linguistic bias and stereotypes compromise even that suggestion” (Sadker, 2003). If women are not given credible reference in the textbooks, how then can students understand their contributions to the area of study and carry that into their own learning process?

Educators must promote “gender fairness” and be more equitable in the learning process. The use of gender biased text “exist from picture books to college texts and apply not only to gender, but to many groups, mastering this framework offers a useful lesson to students of all ages” (Sadker, 2003). By being cognizant of this bias teachers can help eradicate part of the problem across the board (Sadker & Sadker, 1980).

### **Chapter Summary**

Gender differences in learning is a contradictory issue. Teaching professionals should use this knowledge and these techniques to facilitate a productive environment for

their students, no matter the gender and due to their gender. It is necessary for teaching professionals to gain as much insight and knowledge into the best procedures and classroom management skills to benefit their students in the best possible way. One fact remains the same throughout all theories, there is a call for further research on educational practices for all of our students.

### **Chapter III**

#### **Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to identify the differences in teachers' perception of student roles depending on their gender. The distribution of a gender stereotype survey to educators was completed and examined in the study in order to find a difference to the teacher perceptions of the students' societal gender roles. This survey was replicated with minor modifications from a survey distributed to school teachers in Nigeria in 2010 (Ifegbesan). Using a quantitative approach, differences in the answers from special education teachers and regular education teachers were explored. This study was conducted using a sample of convenience survey using a longitudinal survey that was distributed through email and social media. A snowball sample was also used, seeing as though some teachers were contacted to distribute the survey to their home schools (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

#### **Participants**

The study was conducted using a pool of licensed teachers in the state of Illinois who are currently working with students from Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The educators teach both general education and special education classes on a full time basis. The participants were targeted in Will and Cook County's. Will County is estimated at 81.0% White, 11.6% Black, 0.4% American Indian, 5.1% Asian, and 16.3% Hispanic. Cook County is estimated at 65.9% White, 24.6% Black, 0.8% American Indian, 6.9% Asian, and 24.7% Hispanic (United States Census Bureau, 2013). Detailed demographic information was gathered using the survey.

### **Instrumentation**

A quantitative approach was applied by using an online survey to gather all of the data. Google Forms™ (<http://www.google.com/forms>) was used by the researcher in order to create the online surveys for the educators. Emails were distributed in a snowball fashion to known teachers, who then distributed them to their colleagues. Each email contained a linked to the Google Forms™ survey along with an invitation to participate. An explanation of the purpose of the study and instructions for completion were a precursor to the internet survey. The request also defined the intent of the study to the possible contributors and stressed that all of the feedback submitted would be strictly confidential.

A survey or questionnaire that implores answers by asking closed-ended, as well as an open-ended, questions is an illustration of how qualitative inquiry and quantitative measurement can be joined into a single research study (Patton, 2003). Participants in the survey were asked an open-ended question to provide the researcher with richer descriptions in order to present a more comprehensive point of view. Close-ended questions gave way for a standardized quantitative statistical analysis and the information need to use numerical data differentiate the perceptions displayed by teachers regarding their students' gender roles (Glesne, 2006).

The questionnaire consisted of three different parts. The first portion dealt with the background information and demographics of each participant. The second portion contained eighteen of closed questions regarding teacher perceptions of gender roles. Some examples of the survey questions involved were, "Awareness about the gender-stereotyped issues should be incorporated into all school subjects," "Boys and girls

should be given equal opportunity and not treated differently,” and “I try to discourage gender stereotyped behavior in my classes.” The third portion contained one open-ended question. The survey questions have been adapted and modified from a study on teacher perceptions of gender roles targeting the Nigerian education population (Ifegbesan, 2010). The modified survey was shared with a peer committee, including a professor, with one hundred percent agreement that it was valid and useful for exploration in this study.

### **Procedure**

Although survey questionnaires are integrally weak pertaining to validity, they have an extremely strong reliability (Colorado State Writing Center, 2007). Specific validity information was not reported on the original survey by Ayodeji Ifegbesan. The survey instrument used was a five-item Likert scale survey identifying the teachers’ perceptions of gender roles. The scale moved from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In addition to the Likert scale questions, there was one open ended question, which allowed the educator to draw upon their experiences and explain their answers. The survey also requested demographic data for use in the analysis. This survey was distributed online to known teachers who work full-time in the public school setting.

### **Data Analysis**

A descriptive analysis was used in order to interpret the answers systematically. The participants’ survey answers were directly entered into an Excel spreadsheet from GoogleForms (<http://www.google.com/forms>) which organized the data. The variable questions were displayed on the x-axis and the responses generated from the survey were displayed on the y-axis. The data was then split into 2 categories; responses from special

education teachers and regular education teachers. The participants scored were calculated to find the mean for each of the two teaching areas. The excel spreadsheet data was then entered into graph format to provide a visual representation of all collected records in order to plainly comprehend the trends displayed (Gay et al., 2009).

The researcher the methodically examined the survey responses for qualitative data provided by the open-ended question. This provided insight into how teachers perceive the stereotypical gender roles of their students. Although, clinical settings may have been able to discover a greater difference within their findings, the qualitative data serves its purpose for finding basic trends.

### **Chapter Summary**

This study identified the difference in perceptions special education versus regular education teachers hold when it comes to the behavior of male or female students respectively. The survey participants are licensed teachers in the state of Illinois. The data that was collected from the survey, was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet, analyzed using standard deviation, and graphed to obtain a visual trend in the differences that were encountered. Thus, the research design provided insight on teacher perceptions differ between special and regular education teachers in regards to societal roles as influenced by the students' gender.

## Chapter IV

### Results

This study was designed to provide insight into specific choices and beliefs of teachers when it comes to the gender roles of their students. Forty-one teachers responded to the survey which was then analyzed to find differences between the views of regular educators compared to special education teachers. The participants were asked to complete six demographical questions including years taught, gender, specialty, grade taught, highest degree earned and certification held. They were also asked to complete sixteen contextual question related to views and actions in their classrooms and society.

### Demographics

The surveys were distributed to licensed teachers in Illinois who presently work in Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Forty-one responses were gathered from teachers whose years of

Table 1  
*Number and Percentage of Teacher Participants*

Group	n	%
Regular Education	28	68.29
Special Education	13	31.71
Elementary Teachers	22	53.66
Secondary Teachers	19	46.34
Bachelors	7	17.07
Masters or Ph. D.	34	82.93
Male	5	12.19
Female	36	87.80

*Note: Differences in percentages are due to rounding.*

experienced ranged from two to thirty-one years. Twenty-eight regular education teachers and thirteen special education teachers completed these survey which closely corresponds to the ratio represented in schools today. Of these teaches, 83% hold a master’s degree or higher in their field. There were nineteen secondary teachers and twenty –two elementary teachers who participated. Five males partook in the survey which made up for twelve percent of the total contributors.

Once the surveys were gathered, the demographic information allowed for the surveys to be divided into regular education teachers’ answers and special education teachers’ answers. The survey data was entered into Microsoft Excel along with the demographic data in order to see if any significant differences existed between the demographic groupings listed in Table 1 and the beliefs and practices in the classroom involving gender roles. No major significance was found.

Table 2

*Comparisons of Regular Education Teachers vs. Special Education Teachers Belief and Practice*

Themes	All Teachers		Regular Education		Special Education	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Belief	4.01	0.48	3.95	0.55	4.37	0.52
Practice	3.80	1.02	3.83	1.00	3.77	1.06

*Note: Numbers rounded to the nearest tenth.*

As seen above, Table 2 displays the comparison of the survey results between regular education teachers and special education teachers. As can be seen by examining the table, there was no significance found. With this sample, there is no significant difference in perception between the two groups regarding the variable of gender. No significant differences were found between belief and practice within both groups.

As stated earlier, participants who took the gender perception survey also were required to fill out demographic information. This information included gender, grade level taught and highest degree obtained. This data was then used to see if any significant differences existed between (a) males and females, (b) elementary teachers and secondary teachers, and (c) bachelor's degree and master degree in regards to their beliefs about gender and their practice in the classroom setting. No statistical significant differences were found.

### **Comparison of Beliefs and Practices**

The questions were divided into two subgroups, belief and practice, to see if any significance existed between regular education teacher and special education teachers. The graph below represents the beliefs and practices of the entire survey population. This graph is meant to establish a baseline for the subgrouping breakouts, which will be discussed and analyzed in the later sections. It is important to note that a significant amount of the surveys were received from general education teachers because there are a greater amount of general education teachers in public schools than special education teachers. The exact number of surveys responded to by general education teachers is located in Table 1. It is believed that this is representative of a typical school system in the United States. Teachers were unaware of the questions that pertain to belief and

practice. The sixteen questions offered on the survey were randomized. The following table represents the mean and standard deviation of the questions categorized under belief.

Figure 1. *Results from Entire Population Surveyed in Belief and Practice Categories*

The following table represents. The mean of the questions categorized under classroom practice in regards to gender roles and stereotyping.

*Figure 2. Survey Results: Comparison of Results Categorizes by Belief and Practice between Regular Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers*

### **Teachers Free Response**

Within the open-ended question, there were major discrepancies between answers to the question, “Do you feel male and female students should be taught differently in American schools? Why or why not?” No significant discrepancies were noted between special education teachers and regular education teachers. However, the answers given by the teachers showed inconsistencies when compared to the answers given to the sixteen scaled answers.

Some examples of answers which answered in agreement to the open-ended questions include the following: (a) “Yes, based on research about "how boys learn" and

from what I have seen work in class. That idea that boys get more involved when an activity has a sense of competition has been borne out in my class frequently if I use such an activity. It doesn't mean girls aren't competitive, but I have seen it work better with boys” (b) “Yes, when it is not based on a gender bias but is developmentally appropriate or has a social/emotional impact.” (c) “There needs to be some differentiation in teaching the genders dependent on the subject matter. To make a blanket statement regarding this issue is just as irresponsible as not addressing the issue in the class room.” (d) “I feel male and female students must be taught in the same classroom. There may be some benefits if you separate the two genders such as: both genders will focus on.” (e) “I believe that it is important that schools recognize that male and female students are different biologically and cognitively (i.e.health class). We must teach knowing that our students will act differently based upon gender. That being said, it is important that we encourage students to reach beyond their gender stereotypes and explore the truly limitless possibilities of life outside of gender norms and constraints.”

Examples of those teachers who answered no to the open-ended questions are as follows: (a) “No--- I think by catering to stereotypes that women are more emotional, or need to talk about their feelings, or can only appreciate romantic stories, for instance, only perpetuates stereotypes. We should focus on the individual, rather than the gender to dictate our treatment of the student.” (b) “I think students should have differentiated instruction not related to just gender but individual differences.” (c) “No I do not feel they should be taught differently in American schools. I believe male or female, we are to be taught the same because we are equal. To be treated equal we need to be taught the same. If we teach boys and girls differently this is showing them that boys can do this and

girls can't or girls can do this and boys can't. Not every boy or girl is the same. A boy may have an interest in what society thinks a girl should be interested in. A girl may have an interest in what society thinks a boy should be interested in. This is just a small example but in my kindergarten class, I have a boy that loves to play with the food. I have a girl that loves to play with the big blocks and Legos. To me this is okay. To me, gender roles do not exist.” (d) “No they shouldn't be taught differently. Every student is different and learns differently not based on gender.” (e) “I do not think they need to necessarily be taught differently, but when gender-stereotyped issues come up in the classroom it needs to be addressed and discussed immediately as a class. Male and female students may need to be encouraged differently to pursue their interests and feel supported by their teacher.”

Again, no correlation between demographics and answers were established. 43.9% of the participants answered to the affirmative that genders should be taught differently, while the remaining 56.1% answered that there should be no differentiation in instruction do to gender. These inconsistencies in the results of the open-ended questions will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

### **Chapter Summary**

A sixteen-question survey, with an open ended explanation question, was completed by forty-one educators in the state of Illinois. The educators were broken up into twenty-eight regular education teachers and thirteen special education teachers. The survey research produced useful data regarding the specific population of teachers sampled. The results show no significant difference between the mean scores of regular education teachers and special education teachers across all questions asked about the

gender perceptions of their students and society. Also, no significant differences were found pertaining to teacher gender, grade level taught and highest degree obtained when means scores were compared in regards to beliefs and practices in gender roles.

This conclusion drawn from this survey was contradictory to the recent research done in teachers' gender perception. In most recent studies, including the study which used the base survey, there was found to be a noteworthy difference a teachers' beliefs and awareness of gender stereotyped behavior in the classroom and their demographic information and characteristics. (Tatar & Emmanuel, 2001; Sahin et al., 2002; and Tantekin, 2002).

Qualitative data was examine using an open-ended question which cause for the participants to be divided in half in their views on whether males and females should be instructed differently within the classroom. These results, not only differed within the study from the questions answered using the Likert Scale, but also differ from results found in related literature studies. The following chapter offers discussion on these outcomes and recommendations for additional research.

## **Chapter V**

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The previous chapter presented the data collected within the study, including the responses offered from the participants for the open-ended question. The data collected provided information related to the questions posed earlier in the study which were obtained from the 2010 study on gender issues conducted by Ayodeji Ifegbesan within Nigerian schools. In this chapter, recommendations for further research and practice will be discussed.

#### **Discussion**

Teachers are unconscious and negate that they maintain biased perceptions of males and females. This data displays a great need for further discussion of gender issues in teacher preparation programs across both disciplines. Special and regular education degree programs can benefit from further education on gender issues in society and schools. The study found that the educational system is not uniform in their beliefs and perceptions of gender roles in society and within the school system as found in the open-ended question answers.

The findings from this study within the discrepancies within belief and practice call for a heightened awareness of gender issues in terms of professional development and continuing development within the school culture. “There is need to change the socialization process of gender within our schools which assures that girls are made aware that they are unequal to boys,” or visa-versa (Ifegbesan, 2010). Through better-rounded teacher preparation programs and continuous professional development, teachers

can better recognize and reduce gender bias from their interactions with their students. Which, in turn, may also lead to better identification of these bias in society.

In order to create change, school administration and other stakeholders must be made aware of the vital need for change. Recommendations for school administration include in-services for teachers, parents and other community members focusing on gender issues and the consequences students face from being subject to this discrimination. Seminars can also focus on sensitizing the community to gender issues problems and unconscious beliefs. When educators are provided with tactics to battle bias, they are better able to endorse gender equity in their classrooms and in everyday culture.

Through the focus on teacher preparation and greater awareness in unknown bias, classroom behavior will benefit. By focusing on a gender neutral classroom, teachers have a greater ability to be effective change-agent and role model of reducing gender stereotyped behavior for future generations. Recommendations being focused on language, instruction, curriculum, classroom organization and behavior.

Classroom teachers should focus on using gender neutral language. This is referring to also avoiding language which restricts one gender from contributing fully in classroom instruction. Ifegbesan (2010), in the original article, recommends that teachers should “learn to be selective in their language. The use gender-neutral labels such as chairperson and head teachers should be encouraged in social engagements.” In addition to altering classroom behavior, teachers should be aware and selective in selecting instructional materials. This is a vital step in altering classroom atmospheres to battle gender bias.

### **Conclusion**

It is important to note that there was no direct correlation between student gender preconception and specialty (regular education vs. special education teachers). Through the Likert scale questions, no bias was discovered between any demographic information. However, in the teacher's free response, there was a split difference in answers within the entire group of responses.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

It is a strong belief of the researcher that more studies should be done regarding the teacher preparation programs and their instruction in gender differences as pertaining to classroom instruction. There seems to be contradictory articles and instruction in gender differences being taught in undergraduate and graduate programs. It is believed that a similar study and survey could be conducted with a much larger population in order to gain a broader insight of belief and perception. More classroom observational studies could be conducted in order to gain proper perspective on practice and the gender inequalities witnessed within schools. This will measure the instructional atmosphere much more accurately than using a teacher's perception of their own practices, which can be considered as bias.

It is also recommended that the survey questions be more detailed and students could also answer questionnaires on their views of gender in society and the way gender has influence over their classroom instruction and school atmosphere. It would be interesting to see how young students view gender roles and the ways in which they are influenced to view gender as such. It may also be interesting to see parental views on

gender and how they influence their children at home in to perceiving gender a certain way.

### **Summary**

This study examined beliefs and practices of educators in the state of Illinois. Additionally, this study examined the differences between special education teachers and regular education teachers and how they view gender roles in society and how they use gender roles in their classroom. Using the demographic information given in the survey, teacher gender, highest degree obtained and grade level taught were also examined with the subgroups pinned up against the perception of gender roles. No significant differences were obtained. No significant statistical differences were found between the answers given by regular education teachers and special education teachers. The open-ended question obtained mixed results, when discussing whether or not females and males should be taught differently. Given this knowledge, educational professional will be better aware of their perceptions and how they are transferred in to the classroom atmosphere.

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Appendix A:

Survey

Dear Teachers,

My name is Annie Eyer and I am currently pursuing my Masters in Arts in Multicategorical Special Education at Governors State University. I am surveying teachers as part of my thesis and culminating project. I would appreciate if you filled out this short survey and answer as honestly as possible. **Your responses will be kept confidential.** Please note that by continuing on, you are consenting that you are willingly participating.

### Demographic Information

- 1) Are you a certified teacher in Illinois?
- 2) Are you a special education teacher or regular education teacher?
- 3) Total years of teaching experience
- 4) Gender
- 5) Grade and subjects taught
- 6) Highest degree obtained

### Survey Questions

Please select the answer that best describes your feeling on how important the following are to your occupation. There are no right or wrong answers.

*SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, UD=Undecided, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree*

- 1) Teachers should encourage male and female students to carry out the same activities.

**SA                  A                  UD                  D                  SD**

- 2) Teachers should devote more time to encouraging girls than boys.

**SA                  A                  UD                  D                  SD**

- 3) Girls/women should be encouraged to enter traditionally male jobs such as engineering, medicine or architecture.

**SA                  A                  UD                  D                  SD**

- 4) There should be concerted efforts to raise students with a non-sexist orientation, at home and in schools.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 5) Teachers should be involved in shaping their students' perceptions about gender roles.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 6) Teachers should discourage students from acting out gender-stereotyped roles.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 7) Boys and girls should be given equal opportunity and not treated differently.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 8) I use gender equitable language in my lessons.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 9) I obtain and use instructional materials which are gender neutral in my lessons.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 10) I try to discourage gender stereotyped behavior in my classes.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 11) My classroom practices encourage students to respect other gender.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 12) Every student needs to learn about gender issues.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

- 13) Awareness about the gender-stereotyped issues should be incorporated into all school subjects.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

14) Schools are not doing enough at the moment to create awareness about gender issues in America.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

15) Teacher education programs should foster awareness of gender –stereotyped issues.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

16) Teacher education programs should promote gender sensitive behavior.

**SA                    A                    UD                    D                    SD**

**Open-ended Questions:**

Do you feel male and female students should be taught differently in American schools? Why or why not?

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