GENDER IN THE CLASS: MALE TEACHERS AND THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF URBAN LOW-INCOME BOYS
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RISK AND RESILIENCE IN SCHOOLS

- U.S. public schools have struggled to fulfill their mission to help all children learn. This is particularly true for ethnic minority boys from high poverty communities.
- Academic achievement in elementary school is considered to be the foundation for the rest of a child's academic career. Thus, it is crucial to understand contextual factors that promote children's early achievement.

DEMOGRAPHIC RISK

POVERTY
- Family and neighborhood poverty has a profound and negative impact on student achievement outcomes through school and classroom quality.

MALE GENDER
- Across the U.S., boys are:
  - 50% more likely than girls to repeat a grade in elementary school
  - 30% more likely to drop out of high school

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

QUALITY OF CLASSROOM
- Both instructional and emotional aspects of a classroom are influential to children's learning.

MALE TEACHER
- Gender concordance might promote academic learning and engagement among boys through the presence of a positive male role model.

MEDIATING MECHANISMS

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP
- Teachers' relationships to students can serve as a buffering mechanism with the presence of closeness and absence of conflict facilitating children's learning and school performance.

ACADEMIC MOTIVATION
- Children with higher academic intrinsic motivation have a more positive sense of their competence as well as higher academic achievement from childhood through adolescence.

SCHOOL LIKING
- Processes such as school liking influence children's academic achievement in the primary school years.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent does academic motivation, school liking, and teacher-student relationship quality predict boys' achievement across the year?
2. Above and beyond the quality of classroom instruction, does the presence of gender concordance between student and teacher uniquely contribute to academic motivation, school liking, and supportive teacher-student relationships among boys experiencing cumulative disadvantage?
3. Above and beyond the quality of classroom instruction, does the presence of gender concordance between student and teacher uniquely contribute to boys' achievement in reading and mathematics across the year?

HYPOTHESES

- **H1**: Students who have higher levels of academic motivation, school liking, or student-teacher relationship quality will demonstrate greater academic achievement.
- **H2**: Gender concordance will promote male students' academic motivation, school liking, and quality of student-teacher relationship.
- **H3**: For male students, quality instruction with a male teacher will promote academic achievement.

PARTICIPANTS

- 12 participating NYC public schools with 4th and 5th grade classrooms in which more than 75% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch.
- 48 classrooms will be selected of which at least two per school will have male lead teachers in the 4th or 5th grades.
- 48 teachers and 60-120 male students (5-10 students per classroom).
- 50% more likely than girls to repeat a grade in elementary school
- 30% more likely to drop out of high school

METHOD

- Trained research assistants will observe classrooms using the CLASS four times during the school year.

PROCEDURE

- **Teacher reports and student self-reports** will be collected in the fall (T1) and spring (T2) of the academic year.
- **Student standardized test score data** for the present and previous years of the study will be collected from schools.

MEASURES

- **Demographic Questionnaire**
- **School Liking**
- **Academic Motivation**
- **Student Teacher Relationship**
- **School Quality**
- **Academic Achievement Standardized State Tests**

PROPOSED ANALYSES

- **Preliminary Analyses with SPSS**
  - Descriptive analyses of key variables
  - Paired-sample t-tests to examine change in variables from T1 to T2
  - Bivariate correlations between variables within each level

Hypothesis testing with MLM:
- **H1**: Outcomes: T2 math test scores
  - Child Predictors: Previous year test scores, ethnicity, age, motivation/liking/relationship quality
  - Classroom Predictor: Classroom ID
- **H2**: Outcomes: T2 academic motivation
  - Child Predictors: T2 school liking
  - Classroom Predictors: T1 of outcome, ethnicity, age
  - Previous year test scores, ethnicity, age
- **H3**: Outcomes: T2 math test scores
  - Child Predictors: Previous year test scores, ethnicity, age, Teacher qualifications, years teaching, ethnicity, CLASS total score, male teacher

POTENTIAL RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

- Gender concordance will increase school liking and academic motivation, as well as foster positive student-teacher relationships among male students.
- These positive developments along with quality instruction will improve male students' academic achievement.
- Results of this study have significant implications for policies concerning teacher recruitment and training, as well as professional development for schools serving low-income, ethnic minority male students.
- Future research might help highlight the importance of male educators by:
  - Conducting longitudinal analyses beyond one academic year
  - Studying the relative benefit of access to high quality male teachers at different points in boys' development
  - Including other low-income populations (e.g., rural poor communities)
  - Using mediation models

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