

○ How do teachers view the introduction of the single-sex classes' innovation?

PR: The idea was conceived by \*(the principal). Am... he came up with the idea and he threw it out to a couple of us. We accepted it, found it was relatively good and it was introduced to the staff at a staff meeting.

**Comment [PG1]:** Top-down approach

**Comment [PG2]:** General acceptance

**Comment [PG3]:** Positive attitude and outlook

PP: and he told us that it was just something like an experiment to see how the children would perform in single-sex classes, so I was open up to it. I was also intrigued and I said ok let's try it and let's see where it goes.

**Comment [PG4]:** experimentation

**Comment [PG5]:** concern / focus on academics

**Comment [PG6]:** opened up to it; embraced

**Comment [PG7]:** intrigue

**Comment [PG8]:** teacher willingness

PN: but my first thing is the meeting I was called to as a proposed form one teacher and I was told that I was getting a class of all-boys and not a co-ed class.

**Comment [PG9]:** male teachers hand-picked

PC: Well, same thing with PN, I was told that they wanted me to be a part of the form level form teachers.

PG: Well initially when I heard about it I thought this sounds exciting. I mean having read about you know, the difference between how girls and boys learn and all of that, and I thought, hey let's see how this could actually work in our school, given that am our students are accustomed to being around... and then too out of the primary schools, many of our students come from single-sex schools and then they're thrust into co-ed environments so that I was curious to see how that would happen.

**Comment [PG10]:** excitement

**Comment [PG11]:** genuine interest

**Comment [PG12]:** curiosity

PC: I was personally expecting to see a difference in the whole behaviour pattern of the class, being accustomed to the co-ed school as we know it, so having the single-sex classes, I was a little bit intrigued by how it would work out, so my expectations were a little high. My expectations for my maths class was that I was hoping the girls would do very well.

**Comment [PG13]:** high teacher expectations re academics and behaviour

**Comment [PG14]:** intrigue

PN: I kinda went into it with an open mind... I was kind of willing to learn, went it with an open mind because I attracted actually this whole idea.

**Comment [PG15]:** open-minded approach

**Comment [PG16]:** teacher willingness

**Comment [PG17]:** open-mind approach

PP: I think that I was just thrown into it and I, just from my mistakes I've learnt;... but in terms of your head of department, you know, explaining to you what's expected I didn't get that. I didn't get anything like...

**Comment [PG18]:** lack of support, guidance, abandonment, helplessness

**Comment [PG19]:** self-correction

**Comment [PG20]:** disappointment

PP: No, I think that it was just that it was an experiment. There was no promise.

**Comment [PG21]:** experimentation by administration

PG: There was a promise. That they were going to train us with dealing with all-boys classes, no so much the all-girls but the all-boys because people kept asking for that; because even after our year, in the second year where more subject teachers were being thrust into this new system, am there was a promise that there would be some training in how to teach the single-sex classes.

**Comment [PG22]:** contradiction re promise made

**Comment [PG23]:** imposed / thrust responsibility on teachers

R: Promise by whom?

PG: Well, the principal at the time.

PN: I think I vaguely remember something being mentioned in a staff meeting along that line.

But per se outside of that, I don't think we received support from the school per se. Based on how the SMT would have handled it out side, I don't think those things were I guess, put forward, or probably, what is a better word ... thought through. I guess in my experience, what helped me during the path was like my co-form teacher. Both of us were more or less were regularly always present in the class so we were able to always feed off of each other and that helped a lot with us dealing with the class;

**Comment [PG24]:** lack of administrative support

**Comment [PG25]:** criticism – lack of pre-planning

**Comment [PG26]:** development of coping strategies – mutual teacher collaboration / support / interaction

PC: It was assumed that the boys would have been more trouble to teach than the girls.

**Comment [PG27]:** perceived bias of administrative assumptions

R: Do you think that was a fair assumption?

PC: I don't think so.

PR: Am, in terms of the introduction to the whole programme, I remember in the planning stage a mandate that was given to the Heads of Department, was to be very careful in the selection of the teachers for the individual classes; cause we needed to look at the personality-types of the teacher for the class; cause there were some teachers who were telling me plain off a class of all-boys or all-girls was not for them. Some teachers preferred to deal with the boys, some teachers naturally preferred to deal with the girls; and that was supposed to be taken into consideration, along with what PG was saying; some research should have been done in terms of providing material for the teachers in terms of dealing with the classes.

**Comment [PG28]:** SMT mandate re criteria for teacher selection

**Comment [PG29]:** Teacher unwillingness

**Comment [PG30]:** Issue of research and provision of materials

o How do teachers perceive the influence of this innovation on their approach to and method of teaching?

PP: ...just from my mistakes I've learnt; also doing my own research on the internet and I have learnt to change my teaching styles with some of the classes,

**Comment [PG31]:** Self-discovery

**Comment [PG32]:** Individual internet research

**Comment [PG33]:** Conscious / deliberate change in teaching style

PR: which is an indictment against the whole programme that I am concerned... because I didn't modify the teaching style. I used the same teaching style – auditory- so it's easier for the girls, as compared to the boys who I recognise needed much more hands-on experience as was suspected from the beginning.

**Comment [PG34]:** indictment

**Comment [PG35]:** no modification in teaching style

**Comment [PG36]:** teacher knowledge of learning styles but no application in class

PR: I think it's PG who I remember doing research and well she brought it to me; that's the only one person I can claim for. Ok actually bringing forward, going out and looking for material and brought it to me.

**Comment [PG37]:** limited individual teacher research

PC: My method for the girls had to change, in terms of when I would be dealing with a boys class I'll be a little more forceful I would say; so I had to take it down a little bit for the girls. I would speak a little softer so they wouldn't be too ... ; but changing the method I realise that you could get across to most of the boys with that same method. It don't always have to be one direct way all the time. But the same method of teaching, where I would go to the board, explain and then give them questions and check their book individually that method was still enforced and that worked well with both classes. The only thing I say I would change was the way I would speak to the girls to the boys cause sometimes you have to be a little more forceful with the boys than the girls.

**Comment [PG38]:** teacher recognition of obligation to change method

**Comment [PG39]:** forceful approach with boys

**Comment [PG40]:** delicate approach with girls

**Comment [PG41]:** same approach for both sexes

PN: for teaching a subject that is generally more male-oriented or more males fall for the subject,... I felt I didn't have to adjust much with the boys, because I'm accustomed to dealing with them. But with the girls, I guess that I had to become somewhat of a father figure. A lot of them started to view you as a father figure and not specifically as a teacher and I had to become more mild-mannered with them. Especially when I noticed from the first session, what I did with them was to introduce themselves and tell me something about themselves. So our first class, well it wasn't a class session; it was more talking about yourself, hearing some of the things that they mentioned about themselves and the possible the cases they had about their lives, they got a bond with you so it somewhat changed the whole slant of how the class would operate and they

**Comment [PG42]:** minimum adjustment for boys due to experience

**Comment [PG43]:** adoption of pastoral approach with girls

**Comment [PG44]:** modification of teaching approach for girls

**Comment [PG45]:** teacher/student bonding

started to see you in a sense as someone they could talk to. Sometimes it was more difficult to settle them because certainly I felt they were more fun.

**Comment [PG46]:** male teacher as confidante for girls

**Comment [PG47]:** admission of difficulty with girls

PN: also I'd more quicker raise my voice with them to settle that for the girls. And so I guess because I'm a little softer voice with them, and exerting a little more patience with them, they probably test you a little more.

**Comment [PG48]:** difference in discipline approach of boys versus girls

PN: No I can't say I changed my teaching style.

**Comment [PG49]:** no modification of teaching style

PN: an evolution took place but it related to the teaching style regardless of the year, because we introduced more power points whilst doing our introductions into the teaching classes so they got more visual in the initial stages of Technical Drawing rather than doing practical; because we recognised that it was more difficult for them and also because the time that we spent with them we spent, one double period per week, and it really pretty short; and so for the initial stage when they started up it was more visual, some writing to get it in their minds what it is about and to see somewhat of a more fun side of the subject than to see they coming and you know, someone sleeping over a desk.

**Comment [PG50]:** change not influenced by innovation

**Comment [PG51]:** use of visual as teaching aid

PN: Yes which works for both of them, because especially with the girls because they have the mindset also "I not getting to do TD" or even with the boys "I not getting to do this subject so, you know, why I here?" They come to just enjoy the air condition and the soft seats that the room provides.

PF: I did not teach them in form 2, I did not in the first year have to change my teaching style in any way. What I had to do however, when I got them in form 3 is that I realised that I had to do a little more of meeting their need at that particular point in time in my subject area that is biology... So I now have to cater to that need as being an all-girl class. So that's all. I think that most of the changes that I would have had to make just to meet their particular need at that point in time.

**Comment [PG52]:** teacher adaptation to specific class and gender needs

PP: With the first group, I didn't change my teaching style. And from then I learnt my mistakes. So the second group now I changed it for the boys, so the boys are predominantly more willing to experiment and work with the materials than the girls. With the girls, I can give them lots of

**Comment [PG53]:** initially no change

**Comment [PG54]:** teacher modification for second cohort for the boys

o How do teachers perceive that this innovation has influenced school and classroom life?

PC: I was hoping the girls would do very well. But with my two classes that I taught [1 all-boys and 1 all-girls], they were on par, so the expectations kinda lowered for the girls but it was high for the boys.

**Comment [PG55]:** Boys and girls class on par academically

PP: Ok. I expected that the classes would have performed better being in a single-sex class but I haven't seen that at all.

**Comment [PG56]:** Expectation of academic improvement

**Comment [PG57]:** Teacher disappointment

PG: So I suppose that that was the reason, because of the performance, because the performance of the co-ed classes were lower than that of the other single-sex classes.

PR: there were parents who were calling also, parents of children who were in the mixed classes specifically girls, were calling for the child to be moved from the mixed class to the single-sex class.

**Comment [PG58]:** Parental input and support for innovation

PC: I think from my experience I find the boys class was easier to teach. The girls were a little harder to manage.

**Comment [PG59]:** Male teacher comfort zone with boys

**Comment [PG60]:** Difficulty / challenge with management of girls

PP: My subject area is different from everyone else's so some of the problems that other teachers may encounter I will not encounter that with teaching either the boys or the girls; because generally a lot of students are interested in Visual Arts, whether is boys or girls.

**Comment [PG61]:** Influence of subject area on student interest: practical versus theoretical areas

PP: but to say that the boys would have given me more trouble, I don't agree with that. Cause I've taught classes with boys behave pretty well and the girls would have issues, of jealousy and all these other things; but I think my subject area plays an important part in how ... ;

**Comment [PG62]:** Teacher rejection of gender stereotype of boys behaviour

PR: what I found is that I have 2 all-boys classes with 1 all-girls and it was easier for me to teach the all-girls class than the all-boys. That to me, would have been because of the teaching style.

**Comment [PG63]:** Girls easier to teach

**Comment [PG64]:** Influence of teaching style of classroom experience

PR: So I think that went against, well it was a disadvantage to the boys and a plus for the girls. And it was reflected in the performance also, cause when I look at the girls perform they have a natural gravitation to the subject, probably it's the nature of the subject in itself, that it is much easier for them.

**Comment [PG65]:** Influence of nature of subject on student performance

PN: Sometimes it was more difficult to settle them because certainly I felt they were more fun.

**Comment [PG66]:** Challenge in classroom management re gender

PN: Yes. When they come to class they are more fun; they learn to express themselves more because well the environment is different to their usual classroom; while the guys they would see you still as somewhat of a disciplinarian so they're quicker to settle;

**Comment [PG67]:** Variations in teacher/student interaction/relations

**Comment [PG68]:** Teacher as accommodator versus disciplinarian

PN: and exerting a little more patience with them, they probably test you a little more.

**Comment [PG69]:** Male teacher challenge from girls

PG: I only had all-girls classes; and well teaching Spanish, it was fairly easy to get through. In the second year I had one boys class and one girls class and I know for a fact that my size does not help dealing with the boys. It doesn't help and I don't have a loud voice either so that dealing with the boys has been, and still is, probably one of my biggest challenges; because they feel that they can do whatever they want and it's harder to control in that class than in the all-girls class.

**Comment [PG70]:** Influence of subject area on student gender re interest

**Comment [PG71]:** Effect of teacher size on class management

**Comment [PG72]:** Difficulty of boys classes

And even the all-girls classes in the second year has been much more difficult than the group I had in the first year... I think with the second group it doesn't appear that way because boys are usually, don't gravitate towards languages; you know you'll get the exceptional ones, maybe one or two in a class and they already have the mindset that I cannot do Spanish; even before they learn the first word, they've already made up their minds that they can't. And that tarnishes the subject. And so that takes a lot more effort to put in to teaching languages with the boys.

**Comment [PG73]:** Influence of class personality and tone

**Comment [PG74]:** Boys and languages – negative mindset; challenged classroom

**Comment [PG75]:** Greater teacher effort required

PP: the boys. They take longer to settle down especially if you have them in the afternoon, after lunch. Whereas the girls are a little more proactive, they would come up early, they would set up the room. A few of the boys would do it if they're interested in the subject, but mostly the girls.

**Comment [PG76]:** Influence of student gender on classroom environment/tone/mood

They are more orderly, they are more open to do the 'girly' stuff, which is like the fabric and stuff. But like wire-bending, no. With the boys I could get them to do anything; I could get them

**Comment [PG77]:** Teacher praise for girls proactive nature

to do the fabric as well, as they are more open to doing practical. With the girls are more into talking, analysing and then it have certain things that they would want to do; like fabric once it's not too messy. But the boys anything practical you give them they are willing to do; and they're very competitive so I'd use that to my advantage; so we'll see whose product is better than the others and which class has better work than the other classes. I would motivate them and get them to work that way.

**Comment [PG78]:** Teacher praise for boys willingness and risk-taking

**Comment [PG79]:** Taking advantage of boys competitive nature as motivation

PC: I would say the competitive drive was there; cause everybody was in a way fighting to see who would come first. So it had a positive aspect in terms of subject area. With the form level, which I'm the form teacher of an all-boys class, I realise the boys start to tend, well they tend to

**Comment [PG80]:** Increased positive academic competition among boys

What are teachers views regarding the potential for adoption of this innovation

PR: would have been because of the teaching style which is an indictment against the whole programme that I am concerned... because I didn't modify the teaching style.

**Comment [PG81]:** Indictment of programme – non modification of teaching style

PR: cause there were some teachers who were telling me plain off a class of all-boys or all-girls was not for them... some research should have been done in terms of providing material for the teachers in terms of dealing with the classes.

**Comment [PG82]:** Continued opposition/disinterest by some teachers to be considered

**Comment [PG83]:** Lack of research and teacher support

PR: that type of research that was needed.

PG: So that at one point I even wondered, maybe we should go back to this co-ed system and finish, because there wasn't that much difference.

**Comment [PG84]:** Teacher doubts due to insignificance of innovation's influence

PF: Lower school, I would go lower school.

**Comment [PG85]:** Recommendation for implementation only at lower school

R: So you think that the interaction that they have during break and lunch is not enough?

PF: It's not enough. Being in a class sitting next to a boy who's going through puberty and a female who's going through puberty is a problem; is an issue. Sometimes they're not able to cope with boys. And they usually say boys and books don't mix. Well it's the same thing girls and books don't mix for boys either right. And they're not able to interact and to understand what's happening with them as an individual at that age going through certain things. And we really would see it. For example, if a girl, the first time she sees her menstrual period is in a classroom sitting next to a boy is very embarrassing; as opposed to if it happens in a class with all girls you know that the girl next to me it would have happened to her to, and she would have been able to sympathise with her, as opposed to a boy who would get on crazy. They have never seen something like that before. So you know it puts them in a more comfortable position, being in the lower forms going into puberty, at the onset of puberty, so that they are able to focus faster on their school work.

**Comment [PG86]:** Insufficient socialization opportunities

PF: So I'm all for it, but it has to be done in the appropriate way. Here in our education system we don't revisit things. We put them into place and however it hangs it swings.

**Comment [PG87]:** Academic and developmental benefits of innovation

**Comment [PG88]:** Teacher support for innovation on condition...

**Comment [PG89]:** Criticism of local culture of non re-visitation of innovations

PC: I would say that PF has some good points yes, but in a way I disagree. With the idea, if you want to implement it from form 1 and form 2; yes they are going from young teens to older

**Comment [PG90]:** Differing viewpoints

teens. If you're trying to get a mindset of what school is about, I believe the social time – break time and lunch time should be sufficient. And if we don't think that's sufficient then we should organise programmes where they could mix and mingle with the other sex. Like afterschool dance club, a drama club where they can meet and; so different social events to have them interacting with each other. And once they know when come into the class, they understand what the classroom environment is about.

**Comment [PG91]:** Recommendation to provide external programmes to facilitate socialization

PR: And I'm not saying that our system is just break time and lunch time. We fail to recognise that in that period before school and after school there are a lot of opportunities for interaction that we don't take note of. Ok,

**Comment [PG92]:** Teacher view of socialization opportunities

PR: Am my position is that especially form 3 specifically that it should continue; because the idea is that they will remain as one group for just Maths and English only; and then we now have to opportunity to mix them in classes – male and female. Because they have already grown accustomed to their female counterparts in the corridor; so they are now getting the opportunity to sit in a classroom with them. But it is not 24/7 per se; not right through the day.

**Comment [PG93]:** Teacher support for continuation of innovation

**Comment [PG94]:** Teacher support due to student adaptation to innovation

R: So will that make you change what you said? I didn't consider that they would get to mix in form 4...

PF: Yes they will be in single-sex classes in lower school and in upper school there will be an opportunity for them to mix. But by then they would have been established in terms of who they are as a male, and who they are as a female. So it doesn't, so it shouldn't psych them in any way because as PR was saying they do have interaction before, during and after school. So that they now going into a class and having the opportunity to sit next to a guy should not psych them out any more because they would have gone through the whole initial puberty stage. So that right they are established, they know who they are, they know what's going on with them, and they have an understanding of what's happening with the boys; they now reach a stage where they are better able to cope with that.

**Comment [PG95]:** Strength of innovation

**Comment [PG96]:** Teacher change in point of view. Agreement with opportunities available for student interaction

**Comment [PG97]:** Students better prepared to cope

PP: Before our discussion I was kind of against it; but now as I have heard the other view points and now that we're discussing it, I've changed a bit. And I agree both with PR and PF's view on

**Comment [PG98]:** Another change in teacher support for continuation