

This eBrief highlights how creativity bias limits recognition of women's achievements and underscores the need for early interventions—precisely the questions our next [Global Action Research Collaborative on Girls' Education \(GARC\)](#) cohort will investigate. With the 2026–27 theme Creativity as Catalyst: Teaching for Possibility in Girls' Schools, fellows will explore how girls' schools can nurture creativity as both a skill and outcome, challenging stereotypes and designing classrooms where imagination and originality thrive. Consider nominating your teaching staff to apply to join this cohort and contribute to advancing this critical work.



## eBRIEF RESEARCH SUMMARY FOR PRINCIPALS

### Issue 18 | 21 September 2025

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## Targeting the Creativity Gender Bias: How to intervene and understand the creativity gender gap

### Key insights from recent research:

- New research suggests that **there needs to be a greater understanding of the causes of female underrepresentation in creativity.**
- A **creativity gender bias** is a potential cause of this gender gap.
- There are various contributing factors to this bias including **ingrained stereotypes.**
- While many interventions to address this challenge will apply to adults, the research suggests this cycle must be broken early through **interventions that can occur during childhood and adolescence.**
- Schools have an **important opportunity to intervene in the cycle of underrepresentation** at an early age.

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There is a well-recognised gender gap in creative achievement. Women are underrepresented as high-achieving creators across many domains of creativity. Even when there is minimal difference in creative potential and ability, this gender gap remains apparent. Yet current explanations for its cause are incomplete. New research published in *Perspectives on Psychological Science* has tackled this topic to better understand why this is occurring and make suggestions for interventions that could assist in improving the gender gap by targeting a creativity gender bias.

Despite a long-standing underrepresentation of women in many domains of creativity, why this occurs is still unclear. This new research suggests focussing on this underrepresentation from the perspective of a creativity gender bias. Both men and women typically attribute greater creativity to men than women. Previously, it has been suggested that the gender gap in creative achievement could be caused by neurological differences, personal traits and motivations, or social and cultural background. The cause has to date not been clearly identified. This is a

complex challenge, and certainly one where girls' schools already actively create a supportive, encouraging environment where students can fully explore diverse opportunities in many ways.

Christa L. Taylor, from the Université catholique de Louvain and University of Connecticut, suggests we can understand the impact of the gender gap on women by considering the impact of gender stereotypes and bias that are formed through interactions with the surrounding environment – including both internal and external factors. Taylor suggests that some of the most significant factors impacting this bias are exposure to ingrained gender stereotypes affecting girls from early childhood, personal beliefs regarding gendered stereotypes, creative capability and self-efficacy, level of interest and enjoyment in the particular task, motivation and cost. Other factors include different levels of access to opportunities, resources (both tangible such as finances or equipment, and intangible such as encouragement), and levels of reward and acknowledgement for female creativity.

Many of these influencing factors will affect women after they have completed their education, or after they are already actively working in their chosen creative field. However, girls' schools are well aware that the impact of stereotypes and similar challenges can still impact girls. Girls' schools support students to navigate these challenges, and students are more likely to participate in male-dominated areas such sports and STEM. Educators and schools also play a key role in addressing these factors from an early age, especially by providing girls with the toolkit to challenge ingrained gender assumptions and stereotypes while navigating challenges such as reduced recognition or opportunities in other environments. Schools have an important opportunity to intervene in this cycle of under representation.

Taylor acknowledges that any interventions need to be both feasible and effective. One of the key interventions suggested is long-term, purposeful exposure to real world, counter stereotypical role models as a way to expose girls to high-achieving female creators. Combining the presence and engagement with role models with other interventions is considered important. Potential options put forward for children and pre-adolescents include community involvement, follow-up activities from events, and explicit encouragement. Interventions suggested to be more effective for adolescents and young adults are those that involve more active engagement, with potential inclusion of role models that have similar traits to students themselves.

The research also puts forward some further interventions that more typically apply outside of the school environment. These include making nominations and selection processes for opportunities and awards gender blind, ensuring that evaluations for opportunities, resources and awards be focussed on the work rather than the applicant's characteristics, and providing transparency around the nomination and selection process for awards. While some of these interventions will be unnecessary in the girls' school environment and apply to processes occurring in the creative arts field more broadly, it reinforces the benefits offered by providing a supportive space in which girls can fully explore their creativity through robust and diverse opportunities. Girls' schools, by virtue of their unique female-only environment, are well placed to counter gender bias and stereotypes by normalising girls' creativity.

Ultimately, Taylor suggests that “the best measure may be preventing this cycle [of bias and underrepresentation] from occurring in the first place”. This research indicates this is possible by utilising early interventions that target challenges such as ingrained stereotypes and making sure

reliable information on the gender gap is available. This includes a call for the sharing of accurate information on research, and providing information on how to address the challenges identified, rather than merely saying they exist.

It is in this context that the interventions offered in this newest research – released only a month ago – are critical for girls’ schools. Focusing on interventions that begin at an early age and incorporate high-achieving, female creators as role models with community involvement, encouragement and active engagement is crucial and complements the many benefits already offered by girls’ schools. The environment offered to students at these schools provides a space where girls can achieve their full potential across many subjects and areas. This is already well-recognised. Considering the new interventions from the research to help address the gender gap in creativity is one more step to further enhance the benefits students already receive and continue challenging the gender norms facing girls and women in society.

## References

Taylor, C. L. (2025). Gender bias in creativity: A process model for understanding the gender gap in creative achievement. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1-22. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916251360739>.