

# **Physics Classroom Discourse Favors Boys More Than Girls: A Myth or Reality?**

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## **Abstract**

Mode of instruction used in teaching is key to the understanding of the concepts and skills to be learned. Instruction in classrooms is controlled to a larger extent by the interaction patterns involving teachers, learners and resources. Some interaction patterns seem to promote learning especially science subjects. In Kenya, enrolment and performance of girls in Physics has been comparatively low for a long period of time when compared to their male counterparts. This concern was one of the objectives that prompted a study on interactions in Physics lessons with the aim of determining the common patterns that can aid in drawing possible inferences on the effects of instruction in Physics. The study was descriptive in nature and five schools in Matungulu district (Kenya) were used. The main instrument was modified Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) that was used in Physics lessons. Data was analyzed using ratios, percentages and chi-square. It was observed that there exists a significant difference in the teachers' verbal behavior patterns in the boys' and girls' schools. Teachers in girls' schools used patterns related to 'direct' methods that created autocratic climate in class and hence limited participation in girls during lessons. On the other hand, patterns in the boys' schools related to 'indirect' methods which encouraged boys to ask questions and interact with resources more, thus creating a more democratic learning climate. It is therefore important for teachers to give equal attention during classroom discourse in Physics to both boys and girls.

**Full text:** <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/handle/123456789/18324>