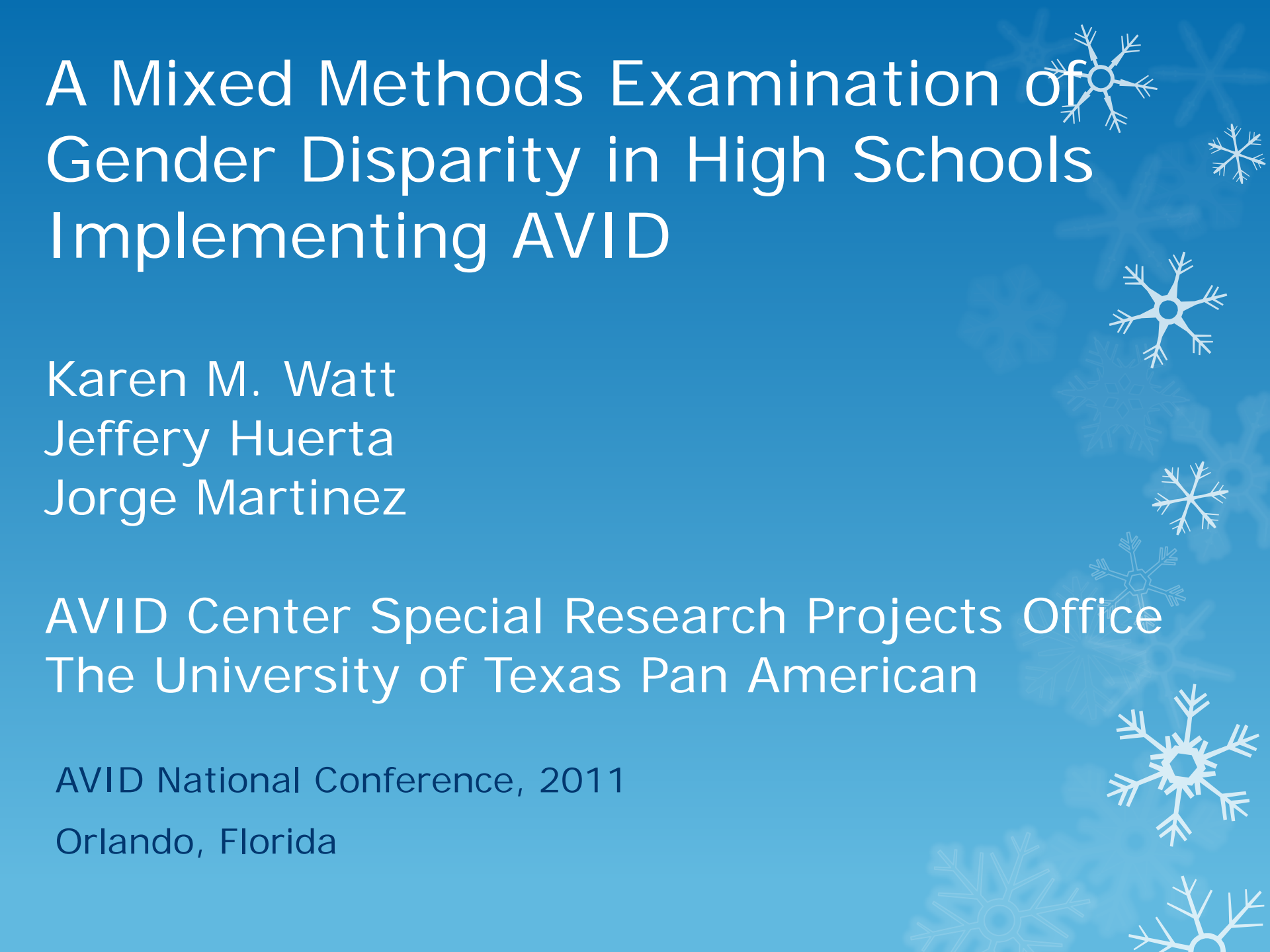


A Mixed Methods Examination of Gender Disparity in High Schools Implementing AVID



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AVID National Conference, 2011

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Purpose of the Study

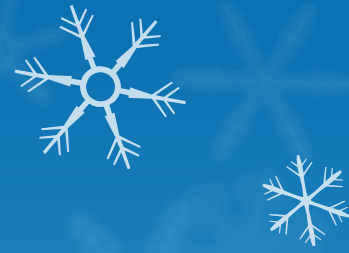
The background of the slide is a solid blue color. It is decorated with several white snowflake icons of varying sizes and orientations, scattered primarily on the right side of the page.

To examine gender disparity in the AVID elective that exists in AVID high schools.

To offer practitioners and educators insights into why males are underrepresented in AVID.

Research Questions

1) When does gender disparity become significant in AVID schools?



Research Questions




2) Do *schools with weak recruitment* of males differ significantly from *schools with strong recruitment* of males when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum (AP courses)?

3) Do *schools with weak retention* of males differ significantly from *schools with strong retention* of males when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum?


Research Questions



4) Do ***schools with weak recruitment*** of males exhibit significant gender differences when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum?

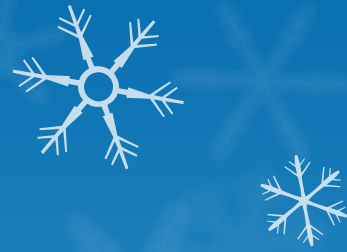


5) Do ***schools with weak retention*** of males exhibit significant gender differences when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum?



Research Question

6) What do AVID coordinators report to be factors related to a gender balanced AVID program?



Research Question (to be answered from 2012 survey data)

7) Do schools with weak retention of males differ significantly from schools with strong retention of males in their perceptions of gender imbalances?



Background on Gender Differences in Education

- Females are more likely than males to expect a college degree (Wells et al, 2011); therefore, partially explaining the gender gap in educational attainment (Mortimer, 1996; Reynolds & Burge, 2008).
- Women are expected to comprise over 60% of all college students by 2016 (Hussar & Bailey, 2007).

Background

- Male preference is often to enter the workforce, vocational or technical school immediately after high school (Collins, Kenway & McLeod, 2000).
- Blackhurst & Auger (2008) – Girls are more likely than boys to aspire to careers that require a college education, and less likely to choose sex-typed occupations.

- According to Jacobs (1996), gender inequality now is “less a matter of inequality in access, and more a matter of gender differentiation in educational experiences and outcomes” (p. 177).



Problem: The Gender Disparity in AVID

- Recruitment into AVID is relatively balanced in middle school, 50% females and 50% males
- Retaining males in AVID high school programs is difficult
- By graduation, female to male ratio is markedly different
- In 2011 only 37.2% of AVID graduates were male

Methods – Selection Criteria for Study

- School must have been implementing AVID for at least six years
- School must have had at least two graduating classes of AVID seniors
- This initial selection process yielded 207 potential participating schools.

Data Sources

- Historical school-level demographic and enrollment data (quantitative)
- *Gender Disparity Questionnaire* (qualitative)
- *Survey of AVID Program and Students* (quantitative and qualitative) – not yet distributed

Recruitment of Males

Definitions:

- Strong recruitment (SRec) schools (n = 44) - schools that recruited similar portions of males and females into the freshman class (less than 30% difference) for three consecutive years
- Weak recruitment (WRec) schools (n = 52) - schools that recruited at least 30% more females than males into the freshman AVID class for three consecutive years

Retention of Males

Definitions:

- Strong retention (SRet) schools (n = 61) - schools that retained more than 70% of the males over a three-year period
- Weak retention (WRet) schools (n = 65) - schools that retained less than 70% of the males over a three-year period

When does gender disparity become significant?

(Numbers represent overrepresentation of females in AVID by percentage points.)

	AVID National (n=1,739)	AVID Gender Disparity Sample (n=207)
9 th Grade	39.1	64.0
10 th Grade	46.4	69.3
11 th Grade	56.9	81.1
12 th Grade	71.3	142.0

Overrepresentation of Females Increases with Each Grade Level

- Typically, females are overrepresented in AVID from the beginning.
- By the 9th grade, 64% more females than males enrolled in the AVID elective.
- Overrepresentation of females increases with each grade level, culminating at 142% in the 12th grade.

Do schools with ***weak recruitment*** of males differ significantly from schools with ***strong recruitment*** of males when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum (AP courses)?

- No statistically significant differences existed between the SRec and WRec schools.
- WRec schools have difficulty recruiting males into AVID
- WRec schools still promote AVID students into rigorous courses at comparable rates as the SRec schools

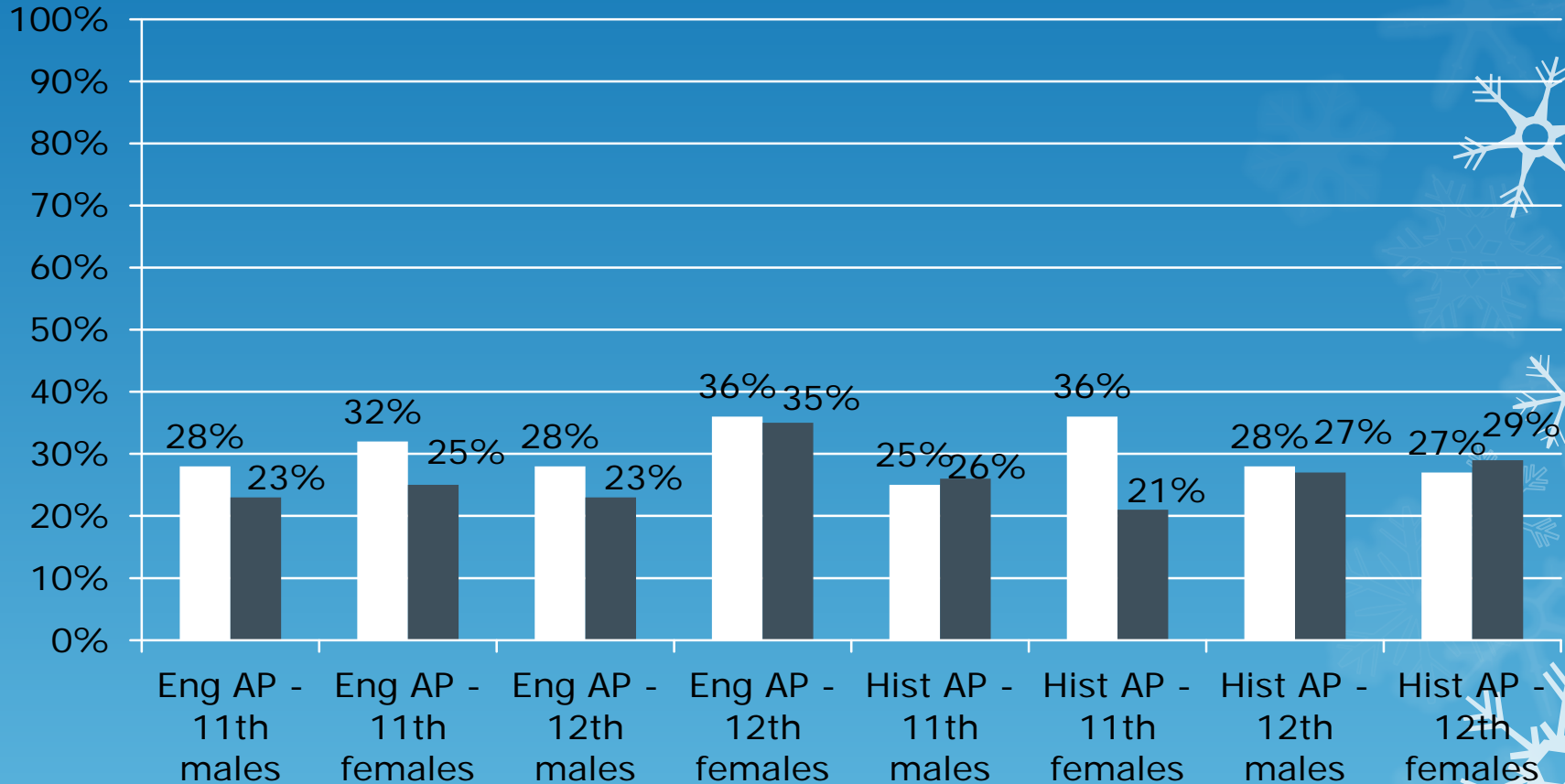
Do schools with ***weak retention*** of males differ significantly from schools with ***strong retention*** of males when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum?

- No statistically significant differences existed between the SRet and WRet schools.
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- WRet schools still promote AVID students into rigorous courses at comparable rates as the SRet schools

Do *schools with weak recruitment* of males exhibit significant gender differences when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum?

- Significant gender differences occurred in the weak recruitment schools; however, depending on the content area, differences may have favored males over females or vice versa.
- No pattern or discernable concentration of gender differences was evident.

Gender differences within rigorous courses



■ Percent of AVID Students Enrolled in Rigorous Courses Weak Recruitment Schools

■ Percent of AVID Students Enrolled in Rigorous Courses Strong Recruitment Schools

Do *schools with weak retention* of males exhibit significant gender differences when promoting AVID students into rigorous curriculum?

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Gender differences in rigorous courses

	11th Grade Males	11th Grade Females
WRet English AP	30%	33%
SRet English AP	23%	30%
WRet History AP	28%	29%
SRet History AP	31%	32%
	12th Grade Males	12th Grade Females
WRet English AP	27%	38%
SRet English AP	31%	34%
WRet History AP	29%	32%
SRet History AP	22%	23%

Explanations

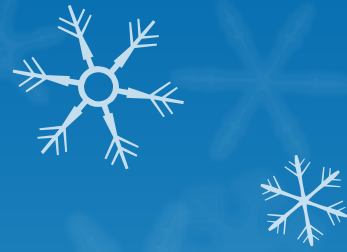
- In all cases, female AVID students enrolled in rigorous courses at higher rates than male AVID students, though not significant
- Fewer number of male AVID students enroll in rigorous courses; however, the enrollment rates are similar to female AVID students
- This “non-disparity” in AP enrollment may mean that only males with a desire to enroll in AP are retained in AVID

What do AVID coordinators report to be factors related to a gender balanced AVID program?

- academic, peer and “family” support
- Active recruitment of males; using males in the recruitment process
- leadership and mentorship opportunities
- staying eligible for sports
- The bonds between students and the AVID elective teacher
- Providing hands-on and relevant activities
- Gender-specific AVID elective class

Selected Quotes from AVID Coordinators

- "AVID is one place where they (males) can be smart and successful and not less masculine." (Texas AVID Coordinator)
- "Our community is very 'un-academic-like' and the boys are often easily distracted while most girls are able to rise above that issue." (Washington AVID Coordinator)



Selected Quotes from AVID Coordinators

- “They (males) would rather get a job working with their or hands or enter a vocational program that they can complete sooner than they would finish college.” (California AVID Coordinator)
- “Many [male AVID students] that leave don’t want someone in ‘their business’, and see AVID as a threat to their identity and “malehood.” (Kansas AVID Coordinator)

Selected Quotes from AVID Coordinators

- “The girls do not get side tracked by dreams of becoming a professional athlete or having a job in law enforcement that doesn’t require a college education.” (California AVID Coordinator)
- “I don’t think the gender imbalance is simply an AVID issue; it mirrors the issue of male underachievement in primary and secondary schools as well as colleges and universities.” (Texas AVID Coordinator)

More Selected Quotes

- “The males in the program are more active in team building activities, discovering solutions to problems, and being leaders for group projects.” (Colorado AVID Coordinator)
- “Initially, there is a definite maturity factor that separates the males/females as 9th graders seems to level out by the end of 9th grade. Girls are more organized and better planners than the boys (initially) but this disparity eliminates itself over time.” (Florida AVID Coordinator)

Conclusions

- The gender disparity issue in AVID schools is not simply one of recruitment, but retention as well.
- Though AVID continues to have an imbalance in the ratio of males to females in the elective class, AVID students of both genders are enrolling in AP classes at similar rates.



Recommendations

- Active recruitment of males into AVID, using males to recruit
- Create “male-friendly” AVID elective classes
- Gender-specific AVID elective classes may address recruitment and retention of male AVID students, as well as provide a safe and healthy learning environment for males.
- Active recruitment of male AVID elective teachers and male mentors have been shown to provided additional support to males students (Watt et al, 2008).

Next Steps

- Distribute the *Survey of AVID Program and Students* to all AVID high school coordinators
- Survey was developed based on answers to initial qualitative survey (open-ended questions) of coordinators
- Survey will contain items related to recruitment, retention, positive attributes males associate with AVID program, and recommendations
- Publish findings

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