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**ABSTRACT:** Equity inside a classroom is very important for the upbringing of a young student's life, and even just as important for older students. Having an equitable classroom creates an environment where students are more productive, social, and overall, happy. Teaching educators and students that an equitable classroom is more effective than an equal one may be tough, but it creates an opportunity that everyone can grow and thrive in.

## An Equitable Education

Let's first start out by defining what equity is. Equity is different from equality because equity recognizes that not everything starts out the same. Equity means that we recognize that not everyone has the same starting point and try to adjust accordingly. While most education facilities preach about equality, little do so regarding equity. Quality of education is important for all students, no matter their gender, race, sexuality, or disability.

A student's quality of education can directly correlate to their later life, meaning that education is important to all. A young student's education can shape who they become, and in most cases when the quality of education is improved, so is the student's well-being. Therefore, educators and parents should do everything in their power to acknowledge equity in education. One way that equity can be addressed is by giving students individual support and recognizing that every student is different. Situations like abuse and poverty can definitely impact a student's education, many educators realize this, however, "97% of teachers agree that equity is

important, but many don't know how to best work towards it in their classroom." But, if educators have the tools to ensure equity in the classroom, each student will be able to reach their full potential.

While it is good to work toward an equality-based classroom, many teachers should be reaching toward an equitable classroom. This is because the difference between the two is being equal vs being fair. When a teacher focuses on equality, everyone is getting the same treatment but is regarding the special needs of each individual student. It would be like giving each student a book, but some students don't know how to read the book. However, equity focuses on giving the students the preparation they need for each of their individual experiences. "The route to achieving equity will not be accomplished through treating everyone equally," says the Race Matters Institute. "It will be achieved by treating everyone equitably, or justly according to their circumstances."

However, some educators find it difficult to achieve an equitable classroom. You see, every school has its student population, meaning that each student is an individual who comes with their own personal background. While educators should accommodate their class's needs as a whole, they should focus on meeting the needs of each student too. Equity is the solution to accommodating each of their needs. Then, when teachers support their student's needs, it improves the quality of the education for everyone!

One of the first ways that teachers can promote equity in their classrooms would be starting by questioning themselves. It is important because when you are aware of your own biases, you can create a better classroom environment. Another way that teachers can promote equity would be confronting inappropriate remarks. Because each student is different, they each come in with different mindsets and beliefs. Sometimes younger students hear things and don't

completely understand the meaning for what they have to say. Older students can understand the meaning behind their words, but it is important to address why those words can hurt others.

Ways that teachers should address these remarks would be by pausing their lesson and immediately discussing why it is an issue. Once the remark is addressed, it could be beneficial to have a class discussion on the topic, explaining the biases and bringing background knowledge to the words can create an impact on the students. A final step that teachers can try would be to try accommodating to different learning styles. Each student comes from different backgrounds and some may learn more visually, auditory, or more hands on.

In conclusion, knowing the differences between equity and equality can vastly improve the quality of education that all students receive. This doesn't only help the students, but it helps the parents, teachers, and school as a whole. Equity in education is vital to a student's upbringing if they have an environment that they can learn from, but especially one that they can *grow* in.

## **SOURCES:**

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