



United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Topic 1: Closing the gender gap ensuring equality in education

Research Report by Irene Sante

Index

1. Definition of key terms	1
2. Introduction	1
3. Background information	2
4. Major countries involved	3
Europe	3
Africa	4
Asia	4
America	4
Australia	4
6. UN involvement	5
6. Useful Link	7

1. Definition of key terms

Gender Gap: the disparity between the way women and men are treated in society

Equality in Education: the chance for everyone independently by their gender, ethnicity, religion, origin to start schooling

2. Introduction

Gender gap has always been a problem, not only in education but also in opportunities, chances, decision-making power, rights, working environments and wages. Even though progress has been made in order to close it, there are some steps further that need to be taken.

In order to measure the Gender Gap, there are more than 300 indicators and indexes that can be taken into consideration; such as Gender Development Index (which focuses on the disparity between men and women on health, knowledge and standards of comforts), Gender Equity Index (classifies countries by their degree on gender inequity in education, participation and empowerment), Global Gender Gap Index (published since 2006 in the Global Gender Gap Report which is based on the disadvantages of women in society) and

Social Institutions and Gender Index (studies the institutions that influence gender disparities). All of them and many others contribute in measuring the gender gap.

3. Background information

After the Reformation in Europe, religion helped give a sense of equality in education: group of Protestants started to underline the importance of the Bible for both males and females. Around the second half of the 18th century the Quakers (Society of Friends) in England and in the British colonies founded school in which boys and girls could learn together. Nevertheless before the 19th century, single-sex schools were typical in all countries. The first boarding school to be co-educational was (and still exists nowadays) the Dollar Academy in Scotland(1818), while the first college which accepted women as well as men was the Oberlin Collegiate Institute in Ohio in 1833. Since then many schools have opened to both genders; even though there are still countries in which education is not equal.

Here are some useful statistics:

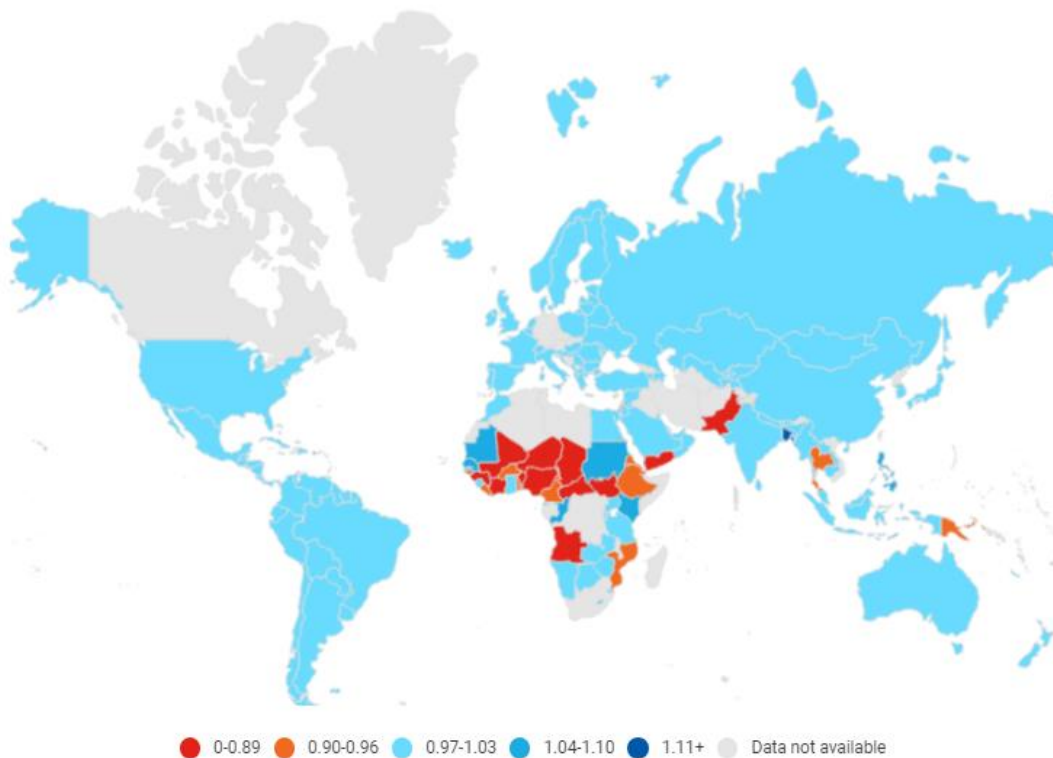


Figure 1: Gender parity index for primary enrolment, 2011-2016

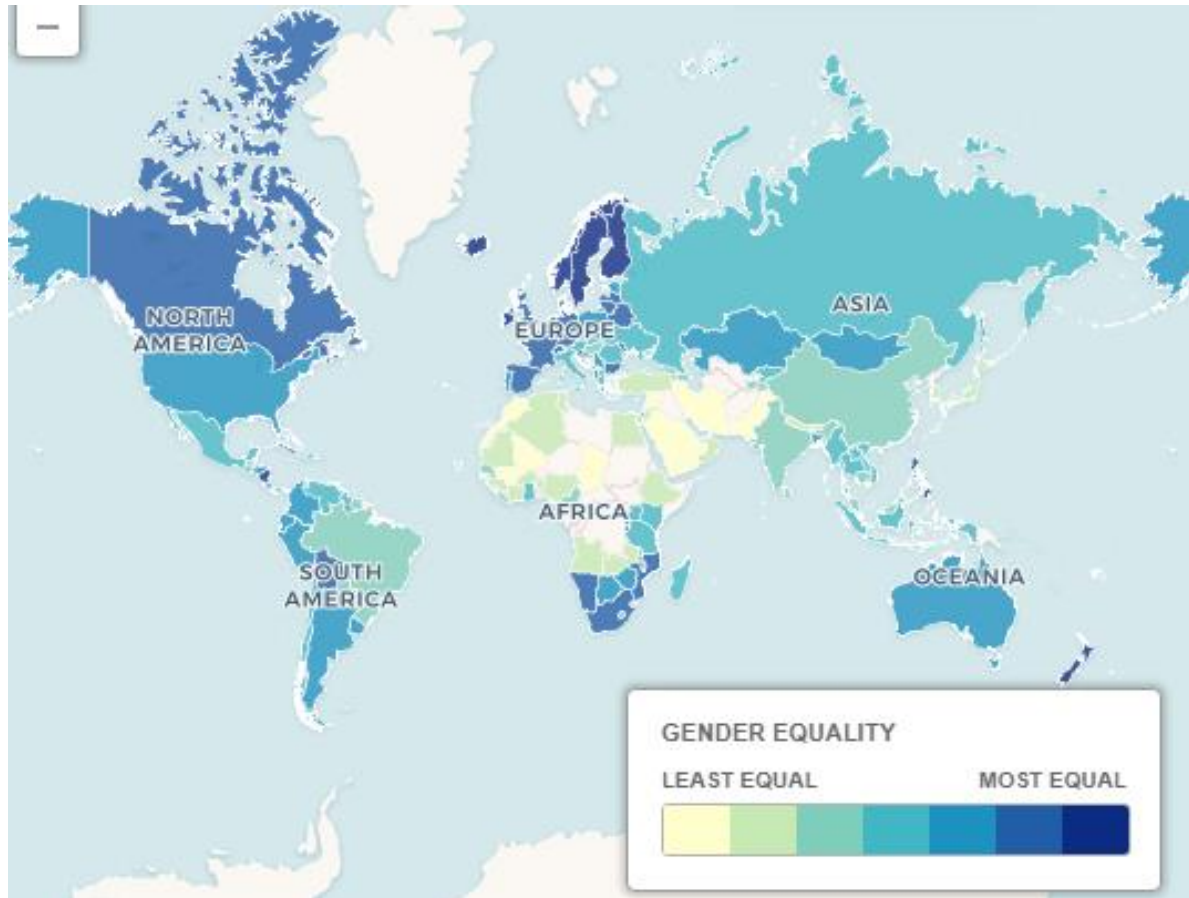


Figure 2: Global Gender Gap Report, 2017

4. Major countries involved

The major Countries who are successfully closing the gender gap are in Northern Europe: the Scandinavian Countries. Iceland, Finland and Norway are, according to the Global Gender Gap Index, on the top of the list.

On the other hand, mostly African and Middle-East countries have their problematic closing the gender gap. But there are some exceptions: the state of Rwanda, for example, gets its 4th place on the list of countries who are successfully closing the gender gap, followed by Sweden.

Europe

In May 2009 the European Commission established the ET2020 (Education and Training 2020). It has six goals regarding equality in education and is a fundamental part of the Europe Agenda 2020.

In 2015 the European Parliament approved a strategy in order to diminish the gender gap, affirming in fact that there still is detachment between boys and girls in education.



Africa

Statistics show that the rate of girls beginning a schooling or their enrolment in primary or secondary schools is way lower than the percentage of boys. Furthermore the little presence of women in the educational field strengthen the gender gap. Despite this, Africa has made some significant changes between the Millennium Development Goals (1990) and the Sustainable Development Goals (2015): research show how the gender gap in primary school has thinned.

Asia

According to the UIS (UNESCO Institute for Statistics), equality in education has increased since 2000, although still many girls, particularly in rural areas, are illiterate and do not have the opportunity of starting schooling.

America

According to research America presents a variegated panorama: there are huge differences between South and North and even between bordering countries. The gender gap in the USA has widened since 2015 while in Latin America it has reduced.

Australia

In 1984 in Australia became operative the Sex Discrimination Act, which makes the gender gap against the law. Even though, there still is a disparity between males and females.

Table 5: Rankings by region, 2017

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC			LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN			SOUTH ASIA			WESTERN EUROPE		
New Zealand	9	0.791	Nicaragua	6	0.814	Bangladesh	47	0.719	Iceland	1	0.878
Philippines	10	0.790	Bolivia	17	0.758	Maldives	106	0.669	Norway	2	0.830
Australia	35	0.731	Barbados	23	0.750	India	108	0.669	Finland	3	0.823
Mongolia	53	0.713	Cuba	25	0.745	Sri Lanka	109	0.669	Sweden	5	0.816
Lao PDR	64	0.703	Bahamas	27	0.743	Nepal	111	0.664	Ireland	8	0.794
Singapore	65	0.702	Argentina	34	0.732	Bhutan	124	0.638	France	11	0.778
Vietnam	69	0.698	Colombia	36	0.731	Pakistan	143	0.546	Germany	12	0.778
Thailand	75	0.694	Costa Rica	41	0.727	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA			Denmark	14	0.776
Myanmar*	83	0.691	Ecuador	42	0.724	Rwanda	4	0.822	United Kingdom	15	0.770
Indonesia	84	0.691	Panama	43	0.722	Namibia	13	0.777	Switzerland	21	0.755
Cambodia	99	0.676	Peru	48	0.719	South Africa	19	0.756	Spain	24	0.746
China	100	0.674	Jamaica	51	0.717	Burundi	22	0.755	Belgium	31	0.739
Brunei Darussalam	102	0.671	Honduras	55	0.711	Mozambique	29	0.741	Netherlands	32	0.737
Malaysia	104	0.670	Uruguay	56	0.710	Zimbabwe	45	0.721	Portugal	33	0.734
Japan	114	0.657	Venezuela	60	0.706	Uganda	46	0.720	Austria	57	0.709
Korea, Rep.	118	0.650	El Salvador	62	0.705	Botswana	46	0.720	Luxembourg	59	0.706
Fiji*	125	0.638	Chile	63	0.704	Zimbabwe	50	0.717	Greece	78	0.692
Timor-Leste	128	0.628	Dominican Republic	70	0.697	Tanzania	68	0.700	Italy	82	0.692
EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA			Belze	79	0.692	Ghana	72	0.695	Cyprus	92	0.684
Slovenia	7	0.805	Mexico	81	0.692	Lesotho	73	0.695	Malta	93	0.682
Bulgaria	18	0.756	Suriname	86	0.689	Kenya	76	0.694	NORTH AMERICA		
Latvia	20	0.756	Brazil	90	0.684	Madagascar	80	0.692	Canada	16	0.769
Belarus	26	0.744	Paraguay	96	0.678	Cameroon	87	0.689	United States	49	0.718
Lithuania	28	0.742	Guatemala	110	0.667	Cape Verde	89	0.686			
Moldova	30	0.740	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA			Senegal	91	0.684			
Estonia	37	0.731	Israel	44	0.721	Malawi	101	0.672			
Albania	38	0.728	Tunisia	117	0.651	Swaziland	105	0.670			
Poland	39	0.728	United Arab Emirates	120	0.649	Liberia	107	0.669			
Serbia	40	0.727	Bahrain	126	0.632	Mauritius	112	0.664			
Kazakhstan	52	0.713	Algeria	127	0.629	Guinea	113	0.659			
Croatia	54	0.711	Kuwait	129	0.628	Ethiopia	115	0.656			
Romania	58	0.708	Qatar	130	0.626	Benin	116	0.652			
Ukraine	61	0.705	Turkey	131	0.625	Gambia, The	119	0.649			
Bosnia and Herzegovina	66	0.702	Mauritania	132	0.614	Burkina Faso	121	0.646			
Macedonia, FYR	67	0.702	Egypt	134	0.608	Nigeria	122	0.641			
Russian Federation	71	0.696	Jordan	135	0.604	Angola	123	0.6402			
Slovak Republic	74	0.694	Morocco	136	0.598	Côte d'Ivoire	133	0.6114			
Montenegro	77	0.693	Lebanon	137	0.596	Mali	139	0.5831			
Kyrgyz Republic	85	0.691	Saudi Arabia	138	0.584	Chad	141	0.5750			
Czech Republic	88	0.688	Iran, Islamic Rep.	140	0.583						
Georgia	94	0.679	Syria	142	0.568						
Tajikistan	95	0.678	Yemen	144	0.516						
Armenia	97	0.677									
Azerbaijan	98	0.676									
Hungary	103	0.670									

* New countries in 2017

6. UN involvement

The UN has a list of the so-called Sustainable Development Goals, which satisfy the needs of the present time, not jeopardizing the future generations to obtain their own necessities. The fourth Goal is to accomplish Quality Education, while the fifth is to achieve Gender Equality. The targets of the fourth one are fixed by 2020 and 2030 and they focus on ensuring free access to schooling.

Since 1975 the UN organises World Conference on Women: the first was held in Mexico while the fourth, and by now last, was held in Beijing. The Fourth Conference on Women:



GeMUN
Genoa Model United Nations

Affiliated with



Action for Equality, Development and Peace produced the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which is one of the most avant-garde projects ever introduced in favour of women's right.



GeMUN
Genoa Model United Nations

Affiliated with



6. Useful Links

<http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/gender-equality-education>

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/girlseducation>

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/closing_gender_gap_in_education/

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/10/closing-the-gender-gap-according-to-the-un>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/maps-and-graphics/mapped-the-best-and-worst-countries-for-gender-equality/>

<https://data.unicef.org/topic/gender/gender-disparities-in-education/>

<http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about>