

A STUDY OF ROLE OF EDUCATION IN REDUCING SOCIAL INEQUALITY



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ABSTRACT

Learners are better prepared to live sustainably and build continuous sustainable development practices in whichever line of work they choose if educational disparities are closed and they are given the opportunity to enhance their skills via education. As a result, enhancing the ability of people on a global scale, including communities and societies, to form well-informed opinions and support sustainable development. Within the context of the traditional educational system, which focuses on equipping students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the working world, it integrates central tenets of education for sustainable development, such as the reduction of poverty, the protection of human rights, health and the environment, and climate change. Introduction By giving individuals more agency and making sure everyone is included, we can bring about a reduction in the inequality that exists in our society. In spite of the significant progress that has been made since the year 2000 in terms of lifting people out of

poverty, inequalities and large disparities still exist in terms of income and wealth, as well as in terms of access to food, healthcare, education, land, clean water, and other resources that are necessary for people to live a life that is both full and dignified. Some society groups, such as those living in rural regions, women, young people, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, and others, have repeatedly concentrated near the bottom of distributions.

KEYWORDS: Indigenous People, Inequalities, Lifting People Out.

INTRODUCTION

Other societal groups have also been affected by this trend. Since 2015, the rise of real wages has been steadily going in the wrong direction. If actions are not taken to promote equality in both opportunities and outcomes, a number of factors, including the earth's warming climate, shifting demographics, a lack of decent work, political crises, technological advancements, and the risk of armed conflict, are likely to exacerbate existing inequalities. It is necessary to organise things like education, healthcare, employment possibilities, opportunities to purchase essential goods, and political engagement so that everyone has access to them equitably and without discrimination. The agenda for Sustainable Development Goal No. 10 (reduce inequality within and among countries) and its role in advancing sustainable development across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for a world that is equitable, tolerant, open, and socially inclusive in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met. Beyond the scope of SDG 10, there are other opportunities to reduce inequality. The goal of eliminating disparities in opportunities and results may be seen across the entirety of the 2030 Agenda. Its Annex 2 outlines 60 objectives throughout the SDGs, in addition to those that are listed in SDG 10, which directly pertain to lowering the rate of inequality (World Bank 2019). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been approved by the international community acknowledge the significance of education in accomplishing their goals by the year 2030. Education for sustainable development and the related techniques are notably addressed by Target 4.7 of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (which focuses on education).

REDUCING INEQUALITIES THROUGH EDUCATION

The fact that addressing inequality is part of the Sustainable Development Goals framework demonstrates that member states of the United Nations are officially committed to doing something about the issue (Chancel et al. 2017). At the same time as there was unprecedented growth in economic disparity within nations, there was also uneven economic convergence within countries (Tyagi et al. 2020c; Piketty and Saez 2014). Inequalities are growing in almost all of the states and countries that make up the country (Tyagi et al. 2020a). When persons from different nations of the same socioeconomic class, at the same level of income or education, are compared to one another, it has been shown that those living in countries with more equal societies have a higher standard of living (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010, pp. 275–276). The humanistic approach to education was supported by Delors et al. in 1996. This approach to education signifies that education and learning are a "common good," and that the generation of knowledge is a part of a "collective social endeavour." It is hoped that through rethinking education, legislators would come to terms with the fact of learning extending over one's whole life and the benefits of such learning (UNESCO 2015a).

GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH EDUCATION

The School 2030 objective of the United Nations acknowledges that achieving gender equality demands adopting a strategy that "ensures that girls and boys, women and men not only receive access to and finish education cycles but are empowered equally in and through education." However, there are still significant gender differences in many aspects of education, including access, learning success, and duration of school. These discrepancies are typically at the detriment of girls. According to the statistics compiled by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, there are more females than boys who are not in school. In addition, there are 16 million young women who will never enter a classroom of their own, and women make up two-thirds of the world's 750 million adults who are illiterate. The projects listed in Table 1 are funded by UNESCO and aim to improve women's access to education and empower them on a global scale. On the website of the International Labor Organization (ILO), there is a page devoted to the initiatives for Skills for Gender Equality. On this page, it is stated that women face a number of obstacles when trying to gain access to and complete high-quality education and training, and even more so when trying to transition into decent employment.

EDUCATION CAN CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR

On the other hand, universal access to a high-caliber public education may be a potent force for advancing greater equality. Because the monetary benefit is proportionately significantly bigger for families with lower incomes, governments have the ability to remove the financial burden of a quality education from families, which has the direct effect of narrowing the income gap between wealthy and impoverished households. Information on how much money is spent on elementary education in each of 78 nations of varying income levels. The monetary worth of a public education frequently surpasses the total income of families in the lowest income bracket by a substantial margin. In the case of a single mother in Colombia who has two children, both of whom are enrolled in elementary school, the amount of money that the government spends on her children's education is three times more than the total income of her family. 14 Nevertheless, despite this increase in salaries, a strong education is a driver of equality in other significant ways, including creating more opportunities for people:

FREE, PUBLIC AND HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

How education is provided is one of the most important factors to consider when trying to determine how much of a beneficial influence it may have on efforts to reduce inequality. Education is essential to accomplishing this goal:

Universal. In the most recent decades, there has been a significant amount of improvement. Enrollment in primary school is now practically universal, with almost as many girls entering as there are boys - something that was a significant obstacle only a decade or two ago. 24 However, if things continue as they are, it could not be until the year 2100 before all girls in sub-Saharan Africa are given the opportunity to receive a full education of 12 years, as is required by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

STATE OF EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY

Patterns of educational disparity can differ from country to country due to differences in history, geography, or economic conditions; nonetheless, common underpinnings of inequality include the following:

- rural/urban divides;

- family income poverty; gender;
- disability;
- ethnic, religious or language identity; and
- location.

Since the 1990s, a significant amount of ground has been gained in the fight to enrol more children in primary education. However, there are still disparities in the advancement of students throughout primary school, and many of the most marginalised and economically disadvantaged children, particularly girls, do not attend school. The fact that only 74% of children in low- and lower-middle income countries⁹⁹ complete elementary school cloaks enormous and frequently enduring disparities in educational opportunity. These disparities are more pronounced between children whose families come from the lowest and highest socioeconomic statuses. In Pakistan, for example, more than 75% of the children from wealthy families graduate from elementary school, whereas less than 30% of the children from the poorest families do. ¹⁰⁰ In Denmark, pupils from upper middle class homes have a 30 point advantage over students from lower socioeconomic status households when it comes to test scores. ¹⁰¹ After primary school, these disparities become much more pronounced. Students from the poorest families in the vast majority of developing nations have a likelihood of attending higher education that is less than 10% of that of children from wealthy families. For instance, a poor kid in Malawi has roughly a third of the probability that a child from a wealthier family has of enrolling in secondary school, and less than one percent of the chance that a child from a wealthier family has of enrolling in higher education. ¹⁰² Another significant contributor to inequality is geographic location. Children living in rural areas are at a significant disadvantage in the majority of developing countries. Children living in urban areas have a much higher chance of attending school compared to children living in rural areas in Senegal. ¹⁰³ Children with disabilities have a higher dropout rate than any other subset of children, regardless of economic level, in the vast majority of low- and middle-income nations.

These trends are extensively represented in learning disparities, which show that the children from the poorest families continuously perform at lower levels than their classmates from richer families. At the conclusion of elementary school in Madagascar, those who come from wealthy

families acquire the fundamentals of reading at a rate of 97%, while those who come from impoverished families only reach this level at a rate of 15%.

UNEQUAL EDUCATION DIVIDES US

The current educational system does not do nearly enough to guarantee that children may learn together or from one another. A kid who is born into a wealthy family in many underdeveloped nations will have access to the best schools, the best teachers, and more opportunity to expand the privileges that they have received from their family. They will be in a position to put their fortune to use in order to ensure that their offspring follow in their footsteps. If they are fortunate enough to receive an education, the world's poorest girls and boys will already be at a significant disadvantage when they enter the classroom because of their lack of wealth, poor health, and persistent starvation. They will then have a difficult time learning in overcrowded classrooms that are devoid of teachers, textbooks, and bathrooms. They are going to teach their children to be poor and hopeless. Pulled out of schools before their brothers, millions more of the world's poorest girls – whose education is sometimes considered a "waste" beyond a certain age because of ingrained gender standards – will continue to have their life opportunities hampered by an education that is all too brief. It is inevitable that inequality will persist so long as the educational opportunities available in rural areas, towns, and cities across the developing globe are segmented according to socioeconomic status, wealth, ethnicity, gender, and other markers of privilege and exclusion. Patterns of segregated education contribute to the development of segregated communities by developing a gap between those who are privileged and those who are not right from the beginning of their lives. When schools become safe havens for equity in the community, they are in a better position to question the policies that continue to maintain economic inequality in wider society. They have the ability to provide young people with the tools necessary to go out into the world and establish societies that are more egalitarian.

Unequal education is eroding democracy

Education disparities have significant repercussions not only for individuals but also for our communities as a whole. A stratified and segregated system in which a low-quality education is available to the majority while the more privileged can pay for a better education does little to

facilitate social cohesion or build a public sense of a collective. This is because the majority of people in such a system are not able to afford a better education. A growing number of people in various nations see democratic institutions with broad scepticism as a result of growing inequality. 109 Citizens have a sense of betrayal when their governments fail to fulfil fundamental responsibilities, such as providing high-caliber public services. This scepticism erodes democratic institutions, particularly when governments fail to guarantee that taxes are paid in order to enable them to fund public services, and when people do not perceive any fruits from democracy. The results of a global poll conducted in 2017 by the International Trade Union Confederation found that 85 percent of the world's population is in favour of rewriting the rules that govern the global economy. Furthermore, respondents were unanimous in their belief that the world would be a better place if governments were more committed to providing public goods, such as education.

INEQUALITY IN SPENDING

Spending money on programmes that promote educational equity can have a positive effect on inequality over the long run by helping to ensure that all individuals have access to the same opportunities. In order to accomplish this goal, it must encourage upward mobility. According to data provided by the World Bank, increasing social mobility is connected with increased levels of public investment; nevertheless, the primary focus should be on the development of education systems that are both egalitarian and of high quality. 124 However, at the present time, not nearly enough financial resources are aimed at reaching the students in many low-income nations who are the poorest and who are the most disadvantaged.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

On the basis of previous empirical study, a number of social researchers have identified a number of factors that explain uneven fertility. These factors are explained below. The linkage between women's education and the drop in fertility has been viewed as the most powerful of all the relationships between social variables and fertility. Although some of these findings were discussed in the introduction, in this section we will take a more in-depth look at the connection between a woman's level of education and her likelihood of having children. In addition, a number of studies have demonstrated the crucial connections between the education of women and gender equality, as well as its influence on the falling birthrate. In addition, a few research

investigating the educational backgrounds of school instructors have been carried out. The chapter is broken up into three distinct sections. In the first section are the studies that investigate the connection between a woman's level of education and the number of children she bears. In the second section are the studies that investigate the connection between a woman's level of education and gender equality, as well as the influence that level of equality has on the number of children a woman bears. The third component of the study focuses on the socio-economic status and educational background of the school instructors, which will give a required foundation for determining whether or not the teachers' familial backgrounds have any connection with their fertility. In this chapter, we shall explore not just the actual facts but also the secondary reasons.

According to Levine (1994), education is more about changing attitudes, values, and objectives structurally, such as through improving career prospects or even reading abilities, than it is about changing individuals' attitudes, values, and goals. Because of the experiences they have had in school, women may reevaluate the number of children they consider to be ideal. Attending school may serve as a catalyst for many women, causing them to modify their perspectives on how to deal with health issues or the appropriate number of children they should have. Women who have never gone to school are less likely to notice and read health messages, as well as make use of health services, compared to women who have attended school at some point.

The demographer Caldwell (1979) researched education as a factor in fertility and mortality drop in Nigeria and found that the effect of mother's education exceeded that of health care availability and many other major factors combined. This was one of the findings of the study. It was discovered that women with higher levels of education had a greater capacity to navigate the modern world than do women with lower levels of education. Even if medical care might be accessible to everyone, moms who are well-informed about the contemporary world are more likely to make use of health care services, to be forceful when doing so, and to view medical care as a right rather than as a gift. Caldwell argued further that children of educated mothers are healthier because their mothers are more likely to obtain better health care for their children, even if doing so necessitates challenging the authority of mother-in-laws, husbands, or medical personnel. This is because educated mothers are more likely to have access to information and

resources that allow them to advocate for their children. Because of this, their plans for the future may change regarding their fertility.

Cleland and Jejeebhoy (1996) have illustrated the range of fertility rates by women's length of schooling in a number of South Asian nations in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These countries were picked because of their high rates of poverty. According to the findings of their research, the rate of fertility among illiterate women in Nepal, Pakistan, and India is significantly lower than that of highly educated or secondaryly educated women. On the other hand, in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the rate of fertility among illiterate women is only 2.8, whereas the rate of fertility among primarily educated women is 3.0. The findings of the study indicate to them that the relationship between literacy and fertility is not always one that points in the other direction.

An intriguing conclusion of the influence of education was obtained by Adam-Chak and Ntseane (1992) in their research of the link between education and fertility for men and women in 37 sub-Saharan nations throughout the period of the 1960s to the 1980s. The study was conducted from 1960 to 1980. According to the findings, attendance at primary schools between 1960 and 1980 for both boys and females showed a modest negative link with total fertility rate 15 to 30 years later. However, this relationship did not reach statistical significance. However, enrolment in secondary schools among males in 1980 had a substantial negative influence on the overall fertility rate 10–25 years later. Due to the fact that they discovered that even while a husband's education has a tendency to enhance the perceived capacity to finance children, other factors may become more important drivers in the fall of fertility.

Sweezy (1971) investigates the "economic explanation" of shifting birth rates in the United States throughout the twentieth century. According to him, education is not a primary factor that determines fertility; rather, economic fluctuations and the altering attitudes that follow them and guide the expenditure of their money by households are more important. His findings lead him to the conclusion that fluctuations in fertility cannot be adequately explained by education or economic variables alone. According to him, education, despite the fact that it is acknowledged as contributing to change, is seen to increase fertility in certain situations characterized by shifting attitudes and growing incomes. This is especially true in the period following World War II, which has seriously challenged the majority of explanations for fertility.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

PROBLEM OF UNEQUAL EDUCATION

Despite the tremendous potential of education to combat inequality in society, education systems in many developing nations are currently mostly responsible for replicating inequities. This is the case despite the fact that education possesses this capacity. Existing inequities in other aspects of society are reflected in the enormous gaps that exist in terms of educational chances.

Children are being let down by the education that is offered to the majority of people because it is frequently of a very low quality, it is not free, or it is skewed towards individuals who are poor, disabled, or among the most disadvantaged. It is still difficult for a lot of females to go to school, and once they are there, they have to struggle against the strong patriarchal assumptions of what their responsibilities should be. This prevents young children from reaching their full potential and lessens the impact that education may have on people's lives and the chances they have to do something significant with their life. 96 To put it another way, education is not doing nearly enough at the moment to help bring people and society together.

In developing nations, the likelihood of a kid from a wealthy family finishing secondary school is seven times higher than the likelihood of a child from a poor family doing so. Even in wealthy nations, only seventy-five percent of children from the poorest households graduate from secondary school, in contrast to the ninety percent of children from the richest families who do so.



THE STATE OF EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY

While patterns of educational inequality vary between countries based on historical, geographical or economic factors, common bases of inequality include.

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- family income poverty;
- gender;
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If they are fortunate enough to receive an education, the world's poorest girls and boys will arrive at the school gates already severely impaired as a result of their poverty, bad health, and chronic hunger.

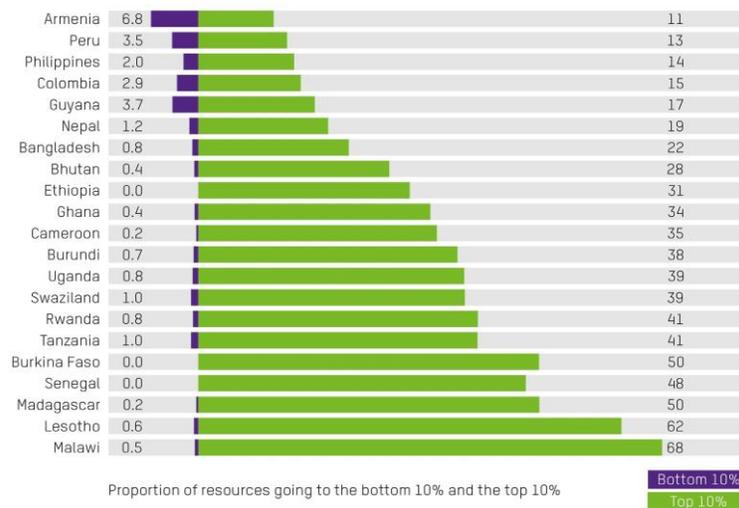
UNEQUAL EDUCATION IS ERODING DEMOCRACY

Education disparities have significant repercussions not only for individuals but also for our communities as a whole. A stratified and segregated society in which a low-quality education is provided to the public services and when people perceive no fruits from democracy, such mistrust erodes democratic institutions. [Case in point:] the United States of America. The results of a global poll conducted in 2017 by the International Trade Union Confederation found that 85 percent of the world's population is in favour of rewriting the rules that govern the global economy. Furthermore, respondents were unanimous in their belief that the world would be a better place if governments were more committed to providing public goods, such as education.

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INEQUALITY IN SPENDING

Spending money on programmes that promote educational equity can have a positive effect on inequality over the long run by helping to ensure that all individuals have access to the same opportunities. In order to accomplish this goal, it must encourage upward mobility. According to data provided by the World Bank, increasing social mobility is connected with increased levels of public investment; nevertheless, the primary focus should be on the development of education systems that are both egalitarian and of high quality. 124 However, at the present time, not nearly enough financial resources are aimed at reaching the students in many low-income nations who are the poorest and who are the most disadvantaged.



Percentage of public education resources going to the 10% most-educated and 10% least-educated students

THE PRESSURE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

It has been difficult for education systems in developing nations to keep up with the growing demand for education as public schooling has been more widely available in these countries. There are now millions more children attending school than ever before; but, too many governments have failed to make the necessary expenditures to guarantee that all children receive an education of sufficient quality. Although many nations are making serious efforts to prioritise education spending, 132 on average, lower-income countries are still spending only half of what is required per student to deliver an education of a decent quality. This is despite the fact

that many nations are making serious efforts to prioritise education spending. 133 The donors are not increasing their assistance to the level necessary to help close this funding deficit. As a direct consequence of this, several nations are currently experiencing a learning crisis: According to estimates provided by UNESCO, there are 330 million children who are attending school but are not even learning the most fundamental abilities. 134 Through education, children should be provided with not just these but also all of the other skills that are necessary for them to lead lives that are healthy, productive, and meaningful. These are the kinds of abilities that will be helpful to us in our fight against inequality.

In addition to the ongoing problem that exists about access to education, this "learning crisis" is one of the most severe educational difficulties that the globe is currently confronted with. One research conducted in Uganda found that when kids in the third grade were asked to read a statement such as "The name of the dog is Puppy," three quarters of them were unable to comprehend what the sentence meant. The research demonstrates without a doubt the significant level of underachievement that exists in many different public education systems. This cannot stand and calls for decisive action to be taken right away.

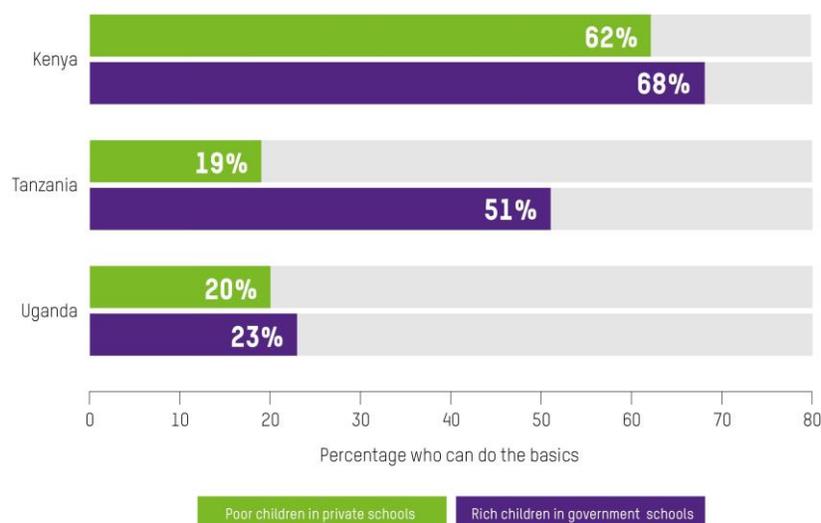
As a result of the learning crisis, some people are beginning to doubt whether or not public education can solve the problem on its own, and a number of extremely important players are arguing for increasing class sizes. Lower-income nations continue to spend, on average, only half of what is required per student to provide an education of a quality that can be considered acceptable. The solution to the problem is the provision of education by the private sector, which frequently makes use of public funding. 135 However, there is evidence to suggest that such an approach is diverting focus away from work on equalizing education and compromising the aim of enhancing quality for all, while also doing nothing to solve the learning problem on a scale that is more widespread.

CAN THE PRIVATE SECTOR ADDRESS THE LEARNING CRISIS

There are a number of prominent donors, one of which is the World Bank, that are promoting and funding private sector approaches for education delivery in developing countries. Additionally, some governments are pursuing these approaches as a means of resolving pressing challenges that are present in public education systems, including slow progress in improving

learning. This has resulted in a greater participation of the private sector in the educational system, which can be seen in the proliferation of public-private partnerships as well as commercial and for-profit chain schools that fall under the category of independent private schools (PPPs). The delivery of education by private schools that are supported financially by the public sector is what is meant by the phrase "public-private partnerships in education." This can be accomplished through 'demand-side' funding, such as vouchers, scholarships, or cash transfers for students to use in accessing private schools; alternatively, it can be accomplished through direct assistance to private schools, such as per-student subsidies, block grants, or funding to private organisations to manage public schools (sometimes referred to as 'supply-side' PPPs). In recent years, there has been a growing phenomenon of "low-fee private schools," which are private schools aimed at lower-income families in poor countries, often with a profit orientation. In addition, public-private partnerships (PPPs) that partner with such schools to deliver education have also increased in number.

These techniques are sometimes offered as part of an initiative known as "school choice," which aims to provide kids the option of bypassing the public schools in their area in favour of private schools, where they would (presumably) get a higher quality of education. It is anticipated that these schools with better performance will introduce competition into education systems. The underlying assumption behind this hypothesis is that the cumulative effect of such choices on the education system will drive up quality across the sector while also improving efficiency and accountability. As supporting evidence for these claims, one often cites the evidence that the education offered by private schools in developing nations is of a higher quality. Recent data, on the other hand, calls into question the assertion that privately-run schools provide an education that is intrinsically of higher quality.



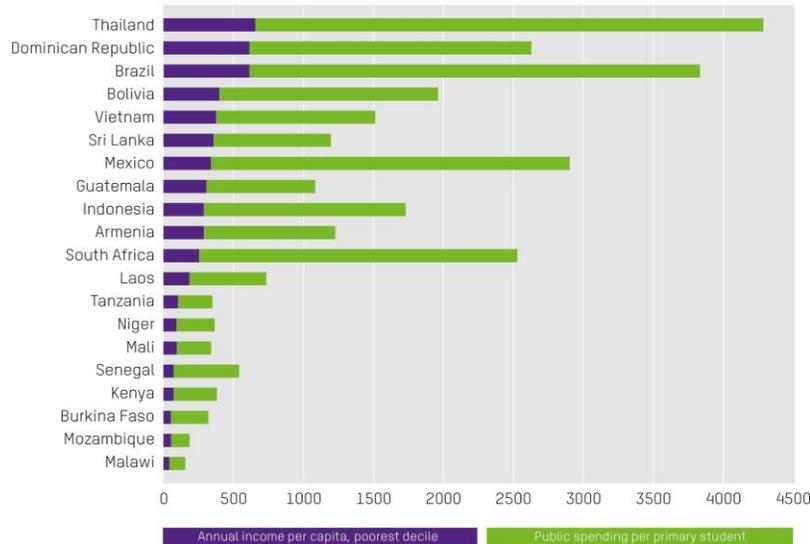
Learning outcomes for richer and poorer children in government schools in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

In the end, there is no consistent evidence that private schools produce higher learning results, as pointed out in the World Development Report 2018 published by the World Bank. It concludes that there is "no private school advantage" in the vast majority of countries¹⁴⁵ once social advantages (family income, literate parents, better nutrition, and so on) are considered. It does this by citing comparisons across 40 countries that seek to adjust for differences in student characteristics. In doing so, it comes to the conclusion that there is "no private school advantage." The findings of research conducted in countries that are members of the OECD provide credence to this proposition: if public schools and private schools recruit from the same pool of students, distinctions between the two types of schools cease to exist. ¹⁴⁶ In addition, children from families with incomes that are significantly lower than average who do attend schools with "low fees" are given an education that is expressly meant to be inexpensive and is often of observably poor quality.

Income of the poorest compared to public spending per primary student

The amount of money that the government spends on education for three children in elementary school in South Africa is more than five times the amount of money that a poor family of five makes each year. In Colombia, the public spending on schooling exceeds the household income by five times for a single mother with two children, both of whom are enrolled in primary

school. In Poland and Cote D'Ivoire, it exceeds the income by nearly four times, and in Indonesia it exceeds the income by almost three-and-a-half times. Because of this, the investment that governments do on public education has a tremendous influence on the distribution of wealth.



This influence may vary substantially, illustrating the diverse role that different policy choices played by the government have in determining the outcomes. Because spending on free public services helps everyone, but gives proportionally higher advantages to the poorest people, it is crucial that education investment allows the poorest children to attend free quality education. This is because spending on free public services benefits everyone. 330 It is expected that the benefit will be of larger significance for the poorest families in a nation that has a higher level of income inequality and higher levels of public expenditure. The most effective illustration of this may be found in contrasting Latin American economies with those of industrialised nations: The advanced economies have the lowest levels of income inequality on average in the world, while Latin America has the highest. This disparity can be explained to a greater extent than three-quarters of the extent by the greater extent of redistribution in advanced economies, which is accomplished by taxing wealthier people and then redistributing the funds through spending on public services.

CONCLUSION

It is imperative that inequities be reduced on the domestic front; doing so will have a trickle-down impact on efforts to lessen inequality on a global scale. The primary factors that are

contributing to the deterioration of the global inequality situation include a warming environment, changing demographics, a lack of good jobs, political problems, changing technical landscapes, and the likelihood of violence. In spite of the fact that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10 of the United Nations, which aims to eliminate inequality, asks for a society that is fair, tolerant, open, and socially inclusive, a great deal more work is necessary on all fronts in order to successfully combat it. Access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and basic necessities, as well as political involvement, may significantly help bridge the gap between those who have more and those who have less in society. Education and the cultivation of skills are essential components of sustainable development and one of the most important means by which inequality may be mitigated. The global education community, including education authorities and politicians, educators, curriculum creators, and others, is being urged to rethink education in order to contribute to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals between now and 2030.

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