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Officer Report 2021

Measures to ensure equal access to education by restructuring government education programs.

Education programs are defined as “any program principally engaged in the provision of education, including, but not limited to, early childhood education, elementary and secondary education [and other forms of higher or special education]” (U.S. Department of Education).

The federal government plays a major role in education – the government is responsible for subsidizing education, allowing education to be made accessible to those who need it by creating public schools for all ages, as well as making community college (little to no cost) available for those looking to pursue higher education. Governments can also support education by making meals available for students at school. There are several other forms in which governments subsidize and fund education; delegates should investigate this when conducting their research.

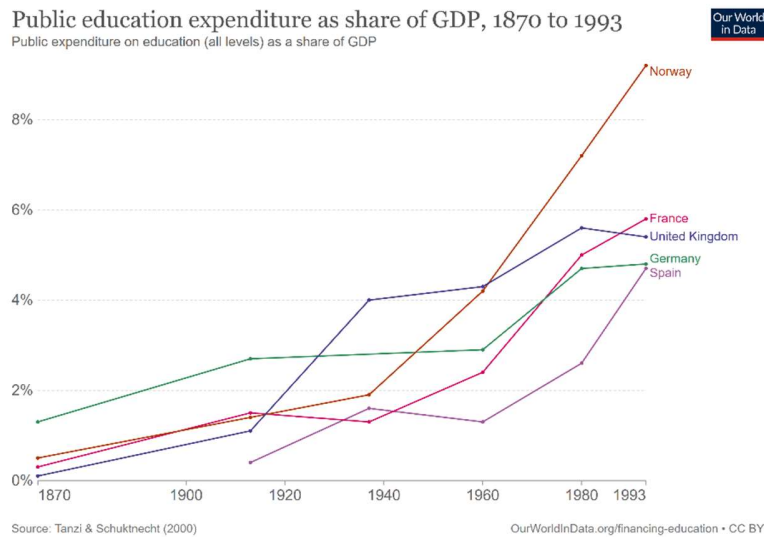
Despite efforts from the government, unequal access to education remains a major challenge. “An estimated 617 million children and adolescents around the world are unable to reach minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics, even though two thirds of them are in school” (UNICEF). This inequality stems from matters such as race, income, and gender. There may be a misconception that the existence of free access public schools inherently mean that there is equality in education. This may be true in some areas of the world, such as Europe

and More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) in Asia, who tend to “fund schools centrally and equally” (Brookings). However, in countries like the United States, wealthier school districts tend to spend up to 10 times more than poorer school districts, which ultimately causes a noticeable difference in the quality of schools’ facilities, quality of teachers, class sizes, and curriculum. Additionally, paid standardized tests may also contribute to this inequality within the education system, seeing as lower income students may not have the means to pay for SATs, ACTs, among other, which may hinder their opportunity to pursue further education. The causes of these inequalities undoubtedly have historical roots, and, as such, delegates must be careful not to turn the debate into a “historical” one. While it’s important to understand the root of the issue being discussed in the debate, the goal is to find solutions and not to debate the reason as to why this topic is a problem.

Many countries are already putting in place initiatives that will help minimize the inequality within education systems and programs. The Philippines is one of the nations that has made the most advancements in their government education programs, for example, the Ladderized Education Program which is “a new system of education that allows learners to progress between Technical Vocational Education and Training, College, and vice-versa” (Hugo). Programs like these provide better incentives and opportunities for students. Other programs include the “No Child Left Behind Title I Grants”, which support low-income families by funding underfunded school districts. There also exist programs that aid children with disabilities such as the IDEA Special Education Grants, which make school courses free and available for those who are physically or mentally impaired. Delegates should research how these programs could also be restructured or better so that there can be more range and depth during the debate. (“Five Government Aid Programs To Help Schools | Resilient Educator”)

According to UNESCO, governments worldwide are expanding their government funding, especially in Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs). Malawi, for example,

almost subsidizes programs. time, nations their public can be seen in below.



completely education. Generally, over have extended expenditure on education, as the graph

(Roser)

Delegates should look for their data in reliable sources such as UNICEF, their delegations' official department of education website, and, for good numbers and statistics, delegates could also look into data websites such as ourworldindata.org. Websites like these could be great sources for data and more accurate, insightful information. Delegates should

beware of outdated information or data, for example, focusing their research too much on educational policies that were set under an old government, not the current one. If delegates choose to use this information, they must absolutely ensure that the policy is still in place, and that the previous government's political and social ideology agree with the current one.

Furthermore, although this issue is relevant worldwide, it particularly interests the following countries: The United States of America, Norway, South Korea, India, the Philippines, Malawi, Finland, South Africa, Australia, and Slovakia.

This research report can be used as guide for delegates to better understand the agenda issue and, as such, focus their research and delve into the specific efforts made by their country and how these programs could be restructured or improved in order to ensure equality in education systems.

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