





UNIS UN 2023

Working Paper

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A LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Dear Participant,

We'd like to take this moment to thank you for coming to this year's conference, and to introduce ourselves and the rest of the UNIS-UN organizing and executive committees.

The UNIS-UN Conference was founded in 1976 by Ms. Sylvia Gordon, a teacher at the United Nations International School. Her dream was to create an event that would draw attention to the world's most pertinent issues while embodying the values of education and cross-cultural understanding shared by UNIS and the UN. Over the years, UNIS-UN has evolved into the largest student-run conference held in the United Nations General Assembly, with over 500 students attending from six continents.

Each year, the responsibility of carrying on UNIS-UN and the legacy of Ms. Gordon is placed in a group of highly dedicated UNIS students who have shown responsibility and passion for continuing her efforts. Our planning begins in April by interviewing and selecting students for our Executive Committee. We are then divided into six commissions: Editing, Finance, Logistics, Visiting Schools, Speakers, and Technology. Together, we work with UNIS students making up the Organizing Committee to plan all aspects of the conference, from website design and social media presence to speaker and participant invitations.

In the last two years, the responsibilities of the UNIS-UN executive committee significantly changed as we had to adapt to the challenges presented by the pandemic. This year, these challenges remained, however, we were allowed to return to the UN General Assembly. We have built on what we learned from the past two years of a fully online platform and adjusted to make this year's conference even better. Commissions were tasked with exploring innovative ways to make our conference engaging and informative for our debut into an in-person conference. Through another year of successful teamwork and collaboration, we have planned a conference that we are incredibly proud of.

Over the coming days, you will have the opportunity to listen, discuss, and debate a broad spectrum of themes concerning education. As you hear from speakers and debate panelists, we hope you will not only express your voice but also bring what you learn and experience here to your own countries and communities. We've worked hard to plan a marvelous experience for you, and we are excited to welcome you to our 47th annual UNIS-UN Conference.

Here's to a wonderful conference!

Sincerely,

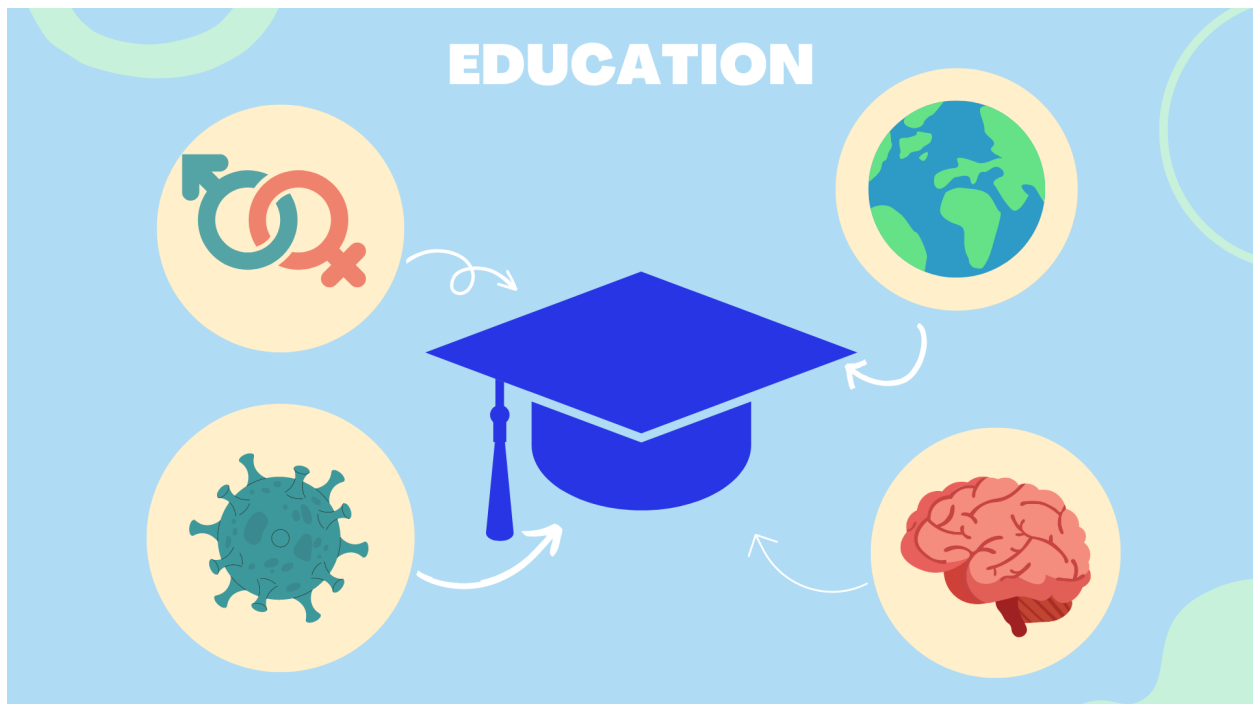
Sophie Chen and Antonio Athias
Co-Chairs of UNIS-UN

FOREWORD

Education is a fundamental human right that is a pillar to a child's development and wellbeing. However, with the global population recently passing 8 billion, the lack of access to education for 72 million children worldwide is a critical issue that needs to be addressed. It is time to focus on the future of global education for everyone.

This working paper addresses and informs on the importance of education and the barriers that must be overcome to provide inclusive and quality education for all. Our hope is that its contents will allow you to further develop your understanding of the issue as a whole and how to address the struggle many individuals, communities, and countries face due to the lack of accessible education. How do factors such as gender, race, refugee status, or socioeconomic status impact one's access to education? How have the pandemic and online learning impacted education? How should the issue of climate change be addressed in the classroom? What are the rights of educators and how does this affect students' learning? How does the education system affect student mental health? What educational inequalities exist globally and what solutions have been introduced to address these inequalities?

We hope that the following articles assist you in answering these ambitious questions and that they nurture compelling discussions. As you hear from debate panelists and speakers, this information is at your disposal for contribution to the discussion.



DEBATE MOTION I

“Incorporating AI into education will have positive effects on learning.”

In debating this, we want students to consider the changes Artificial Intelligence will make to education. We encourage the evaluation of advantages and disadvantages and ways to regulate technology usage to benefit the learning process best. Cheating has always been a significant problem in schools because students’ learning is hindered when their work isn’t theirs.

Furthermore, academic dishonesty is considered a crime and can result in serious suspension or expulsion. Students should discuss the implications of AI, like the recent ChatGPT, and the damage that could be wrought to the foundations of academic integrity. Considering all of this, students should attempt to answer many questions: is learning hindered by technology? Is it true “learning” if AI is used? What is learning? How are skills developed differently in the presence of AI? How should plagiarism regarding AI be punished or dealt with? Can ChatGPT be used in the process of learning without compromising academic integrity? If so, how can it be regulated and on what grounds?

DEBATE MOTION II

“Education should be private rather than public.”

In debating this topic, we want students to consider benefits and drawbacks of both private and public education and how they compare to each other. They should evaluate the variations between different systems of education and generate convincing arguments on which system works better in terms of quality, affordability and accessibility of education. Public schools are paid through taxes and are free whereas private schools are privately run and charge fees. With this in mind students should try to answer a variety of questions: which system is more beneficial to the general public? Should quality of education or affordability and accessibility of education be prioritized in society? Is there a difference in gender and racial equity in public and private schooling systems? If so, how do they compare and contribute to the debate? How do public and private systems vary in different countries and societies? Is it possible that, in some places, private schooling is better but, in others, public schooling is more effective? Is there a difference in educational outcomes of students in private and public school systems? If there could only be one system of education to be used by the entire world, should it be private or public?

EDUCATION AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

Amarins Edens



One of the most prevalent issues for teenagers around the world today is that of mental health. According to the WHO, suicide is currently the fourth leading cause of death for adolescents, and it is predicted that approximately 14% of 10-19 year olds experience a mental health condition.¹ Though there are many causes for the high rates of mental illness among teenagers, including the hormonal changes accompanying puberty, one of the leading causes is school. Between academic pressures, high-stress levels and peer pressure, there are many ways in which school negatively affects the mental health of teenagers. This article aims to explore how education influences mental health and how schools may best assist teenagers struggling with it.

The issue of mental health for teenagers is more pertinent today than it ever was; the suicide rate for adolescents has tripled since 1952,² and teenagers now are especially vulnerable due to academic pressures, social media, and underdeveloped coping skills. While academic pressures have increased and extended to extracurricular activities as well, social media puts forth an unattainable body image, and many teenagers don't know how to cope with such stressors.³ Academic pressure in schools may lead to mental health issues, which can then, in turn, cause a student to perform worse in school, serving as the beginning of a downward spiral. The most common mental illnesses adolescents deal with are anxiety disorders, which affect 4.6% of 15-19-year-olds. The other most commonly occurring mental illnesses among adolescents are depression (2.8%), ADHD (2.4%), and conduct disorder (2.4%).⁴

Though the mental health of students was already worsening before the pandemic, isolation and online learning only worsened this. According to the CDC, 37% of students reported having poor mental health due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and 44% said they felt sad and hopeless persistently throughout the

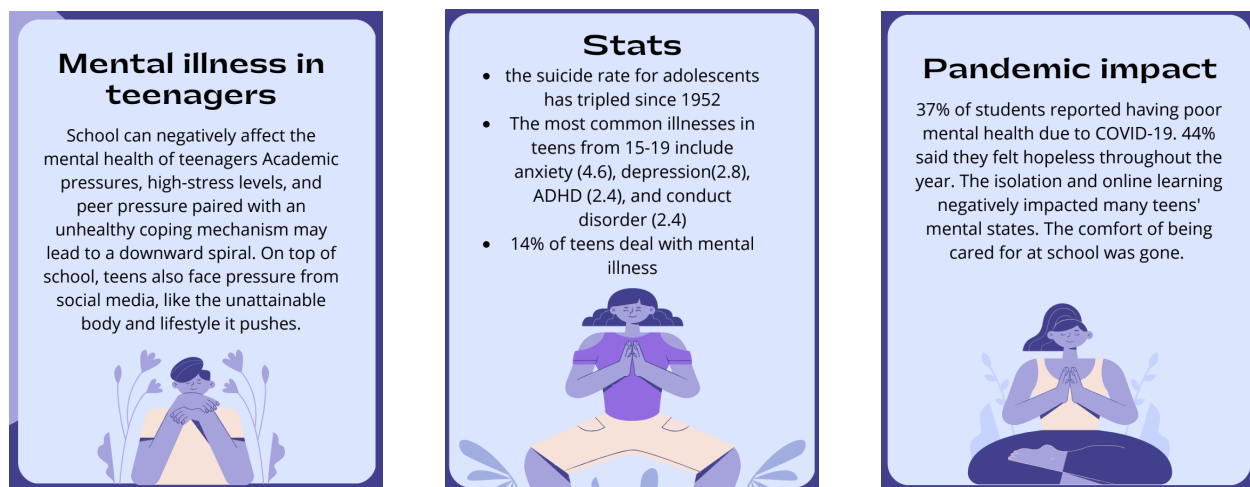
¹ "Adolescent Mental Health." *World Health Organization*, 17 Nov. 2021, www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health#:~:text=Globally%2C%20one%20in%20seven%2010,illness%20and%20diability%20among%20adolescents.

² Rogers, Susan. "Do School-Based Mental Health Services Make Sense?" *Purdue University*, www.purdue.edu/hhs/hdfs/fii/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/s_dcfis23report.pdf.

³ "Teen and Adolescent Mental Health Facts and Statistics." *Adolescent Wellness Academy*, adolescentwellnessacademy.com/teen-mental-health-facts-statistics/.

⁴ "Adolescent Mental Health." *World Health Organization*, 17 Nov. 2021, www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health#:~:text=Globally%2C%20one%20in%20seven%2010,illness%20and%20diability%20among%20adolescents.

year.⁵ However, many students recognized that the feeling of 'school connectedness' — the sense of belonging and being cared for at school — helped them. According to the CDC, youth who experienced this were less likely to report feelings of sadness and hopelessness during this time: of those who reported feeling connected to adults and peers at school, only 35% said to have felt constantly sad and hopeless, while 55% of those who did not report feeling like that reported persistent sadness and hopelessness. Even so, the mental health effects of the pandemic are significant, as the remnants of this time period can still be seen in the current state of teenagers' mental health.⁶



The stigma surrounding mental health and mental illnesses is a significant issue worldwide. Such stigmas may cause people to look down upon those struggling with their mental health, making conversations about such topics much more difficult. The stigma surrounding mental health often causes those working with it to feel ashamed and guilty, leading to them being afraid to tell others about their experiences. In stigmatized environments and communities, people are therefore afraid to ask for help, which frequently leads to higher rates of suicide and life-long mental health issues.⁷ Schooling and educating people about mental health is therefore one of the best ways to prevent this. By increasing awareness of symptoms makes it easier for teachers and students to recognize when a student or peer is struggling. Furthermore, curriculum-based learning can help destigmatize the environment and develop a safe and supportive environment, making it easier for adolescents to talk to their peers or reach out for help about their mental state.

Though it is clear that mental health is a global issue and something must be done about it, the current treatment systems that are in place in the US are ineffective. While 73% of US parents say that their children would benefit from mental health counseling, only approximately 40% of teenagers with

⁵ "New CDC Data Illuminate Youth Mental Health Threats during the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 31 Mar. 2022, www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0331-youth-mental-health-covid-19.html#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20new%20data,hopeless%20during%20the%20past%20year.

⁶ "New CDC Data Illuminate Youth Mental Health Threats during the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 31 Mar. 2022, www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0331-youth-mental-health-covid-19.html#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20new%20data,hopeless%20during%20the%20past%20year.

⁷ "Reducing Mental Health Stigma in Schools." *ReachOut*, schools.au.reachout.com/articles/reducing-mental-health-stigma-in-schools.

depression got treatment in 2022.⁸ Parents are often held back by their socioeconomic situation, as well as the access to treatments, while struggling adolescents are often afraid to ask for help. Currently, there are not enough counselors available in the US, as there is an average of 415 students per counselor, while it is recommended to have no more than 250.⁹ The effect of this lack of support for those struggling with

mental health is that when these issues go untreated, problematic behaviors may follow, which in extreme cases constitutes criminal and illegal behaviors. This is why 60% of the adolescents currently in juvenile detention are estimated to have mental, emotional, and behavioral problems.¹⁰ Another consequence of not addressing teen mental health is that it often extends to adulthood. In fact, 50% of lifetime cases begin at 14 years of age.¹¹

School-based mental health support is a highly effective solution, and currently 70% of teens who seek and receive mental health support get it at school.¹² The many advantages of this system include that adolescents do not need to ask the help of their parents, which means that even if there is stigma around the subject in a student's household, they would still be able to receive treatment. School-based mental health support also increases accessibility, and since there are no costs for the parent, it lowers socioeconomic gaps in mental health support. Lastly, improved outcomes have been shown from school-based mental health support, as counselors are able to focus more on academics and are therefore able to better assess the situation of the student.

While education may be a contributing factor to the bad mental health of students because of academic and peer pressure, schools can also be part of the solution to the persisting issue of adolescent mental health. Instituting school-based mental health support would decrease socioeconomic gaps and make mental health support more accessible. Adding mental health into the curriculum would reduce the stigma around the subject and make it easier for students to ask for help when they struggle with mental health.



⁸ Flannery, Mary Ellen. "Mental Health in Schools: The Kids Are Not All Right." *National Education Association*, Copyright 2023 National Education Association, 31 May 2022, <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/mental-health-schools-kids-are-not-all-right>.

⁹ Rix, Kate. "The Benefits of Mental Health Programs in Schools." *US News*, www.usnews.com/education/k12/articles/the-benefits-of-mental-health-programs-in-schools. Accessed 15 Nov. 2022.

¹⁰ Rogers, Susan. "Do School-Based Mental Health Services Make Sense?" *Purdue University*, www.purdue.edu/hhs/hdfs/fii/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/s_dcfis23report.pdf.

¹¹ "Teen and Adolescent Mental Health Facts and Statistics." *Adolescent Wellness Academy*, adolescentwellnessacademy.com/teen-mental-health-facts-statistics/.

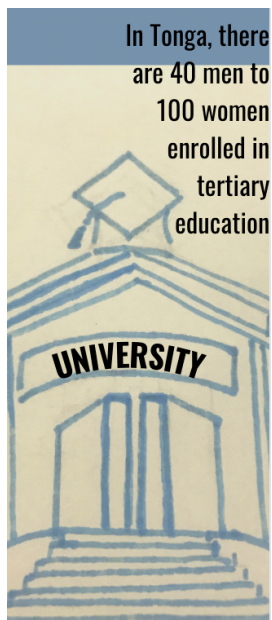
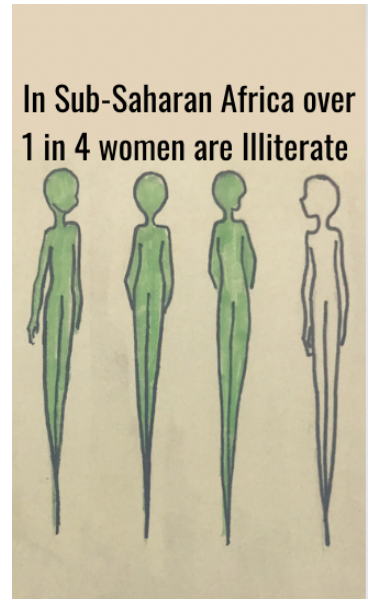
¹² "Reducing Mental Health Stigma in Schools." *ReachOut*, schools.au.reachout.com/articles/reducing-mental-health-stigma-in-schools.

GENDER AND EDUCATION

Xuan Lan Tran

In 2020, 129 million girls were out of school, with thirty-two million at the primary school level, thirty million at the middle school level, and sixty-seven million at the high school level. Gender equality has been achieved in primary, middle, and high school levels in forty-nine percent, forty-two percent, and twenty-four percent of countries respectively.¹³ While the gap differs from country to country, it is still evident that a gender gap exists in education.¹⁴

“Girls are still more likely than boys never to attend school,” states a United Nations report.¹⁵ Girls in sub-Saharan African countries are heavily disadvantaged. For instance, in the Gambia, out-of-school rates for high school-aged children are ten percentage points higher for boys than girls. However, sub-Saharan Africa’s gender gap in tertiary education (i.e., college or university) persists. For every one hundred men enrolled in tertiary education, only seventy-six women are enrolled, and over one in four women are illiterate.



In contrast, men are behind women in tertiary education in other regions - forty men are enrolled for every one hundred women in Tonga, and fourteen men are registered for every one hundred women in Qatar.¹⁶ In addition to sub-Saharan African countries, surveys done by fifty-five developing countries demonstrated that middle school-aged girls are more likely to be out of school than their male peers, regardless of location.

According to the United Nations, gender-based violence in schools is a significant contributing factor that compromises access to education for young women, negatively impacting both the participation and retention of information of girls in school. Poor reproductive and sex education also gives rise to higher dropout rates for girls, especially those who have reached puberty.¹⁷ Women living in conflict zones are 2.5 times more likely to not be in school. Girls are also expected to take on a domestic or carer role which leads to the prioritization of boys’ education. Laws that promote gender equality in school also sometimes fail to acknowledge and prevent other barriers to seeking an education for young

¹³ UNICEF. “Girls’ Education.” UNICEF, 19 Jan. 2020, <https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education>.

¹⁴ Global Education Monitoring Report Team, and Audrey Azoulay. Deepening the Debate on Those Still Left behind Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. UNESCO, 2022.

¹⁵ Their News team. “Why Girls around the World Are Still Denied an Equal Chance of Education.” Theirworld, 1 Dec. 2022, <https://theirworld.org/news/why-girls-are-still-denied-equal-chance-of-education/>.

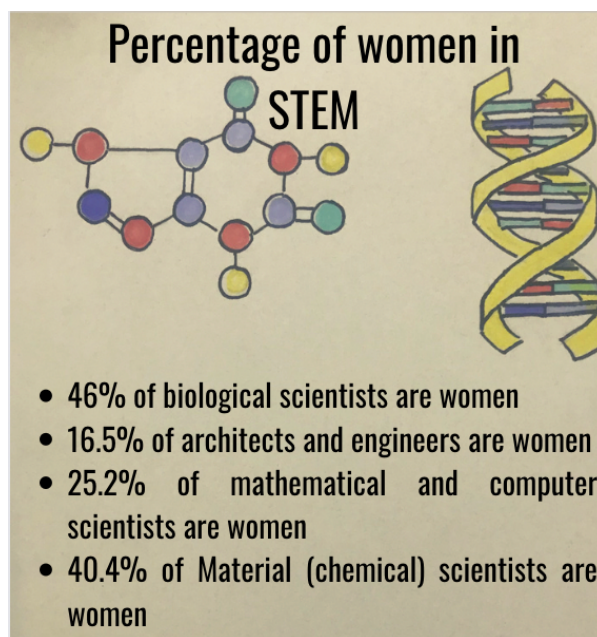
¹⁶ Global Education Monitoring Report Team, and Audrey Azoulay. Deepening the Debate on Those Still Left behind Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. UNESCO, 2022.

¹⁷ Karam, Azza. “Education as the Pathway towards Gender Equality.” United Nations, United Nations, 2015, <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/education-pathway-towards-gender-equality>.

women, such as child marriage or discriminatory policies against pregnant women or girls.¹⁸

Gender also impacts young men's access and willingness to seek an education. Societal expectations surrounding masculinity can deter young men from enrolling in school and push them toward child labor, gang violence, or joining armed groups.¹⁹

While gender disparities exist in access to education, they can also be observed in the different fields of the curriculum. According to the 2022 UNESCO report on gender disparity in education, more primary school-aged girls achieve minimum proficiency across all subjects than boys. Within middle and high-income countries, girls outperform boys in science during middle school years. Although boys perform better than girls in math in earlier grades, the same advantage could not be found for later grades. In societies with few to no gender disparities, girls perform better in mathematics.²⁰ And yet, far fewer women than men are in STEM fields. 46% of biological scientists and 40.4% of material scientists are women. The gap widens even more in other fields: only 25.2% of computer or mathematical scientists and 16.5% of engineers and architects are women. According to the American Association of University Women, many young girls lose confidence in math as early as third grade. At the same time, boys are more likely to say they are strong in math by second grade.



Gender stereotypes, fewer role models, math anxiety, and male-dominated culture in the STEM field can contribute to these disparities.²¹ It has also been suggested that another factor is that when girls outperform boys in math or science, they perform even better than in reading. Notably, these gaps are linked to stereotypes about which careers each gender should pick.²²

As for educators, societal expectations surrounding gender affect male and female teachers differently. Studies showed that after men read articles on gender bias in the educational field, they were less willing to pursue a career in teaching. The teaching profession is biased in favor of women, with men making up only 3% of preschool and kindergarten teachers. Male elementary school teachers report higher rates of discrimination based on perceptions of being less hireable, likable, and more of a potential threat to

¹⁸ Their News team. "Why Girls around the World Are Still Denied an Equal Chance of Education." Theirworld, 1 Dec. 2022, <https://theirworld.org/news/why-girls-are-still-denied-equal-chance-of-education/>.

¹⁹ UNICEF. "Girls' Education." UNICEF, 19 Jan. 2020, <https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education>.

²⁰ Global Education Monitoring Report Team, and Audrey Azoulay. Deepening the Debate on Those Still Left behind Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. UNESCO, 2022.

²¹ American Association of University Women. "The Stem Gap: Women and Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics." AAUW, 3 Mar. 2022, <https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/the-stem-gap/>.

²² Global Education Monitoring Report Team, and Audrey Azoulay. Deepening the Debate on Those Still Left behind Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. UNESCO, 2022.

children than female teachers. This discrimination is rooted in traditionalist views of gender and motherhood that perpetuate ideals of women being more nurturing or caring.²³

Despite hiring and workplace bias, female teachers are still less likely to receive promotions or equal pay. In 2018, women comprised only 33% of high school principals. A 2020 Texas study found that women must work as classroom teachers for one year longer than male teachers to be promoted to the assistant principal position, and eight months longer to be promoted to a principalship. Male teachers are also “significantly more likely to leave a school when it is led by a female principal,” according to a 2018 study. Across the United States, female teachers are out-earned by their male counterparts by anywhere from hundreds to thousands of dollars.²⁴ Globally, the teaching profession is dominated by women, with 94% of the pre-primary educational field and 67% of the primary academic field being women. This gap decreases at the middle and high school level, with 54% of teachers being women.

However, in sub-Saharan Africa, only 32% of secondary education teachers are women.²⁵ The overrepresentation of female educators continues to decrease at the college educator level, where women make up 44% of academic staff at the tertiary level.²⁶ Teachers unions are vital in promoting codes of conduct, advocating for female union representation, and preventing gender-based violence. Latin American teacher’s unions, for example, campaign on eliminating violence and harassment at work.²⁷

In conclusion, gender stereotypes affect all genders differently in the classroom. Stereotypes of women and girls being more suited to domestic work can disadvantage them at a young age, while they may benefit from the same stereotypes in the teaching profession. Legislation that seeks to create gender equality in education must also acknowledge societal expectations around gender that prevent boys and girls from pursuing an education.

²³ Bentsen, Todd. “Male Gender Bias Deters Men from Some Career Paths.” American Psychological Association, 22 Dec. 2022, <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2022/12/male-gender-bias-career-paths>.

²⁴ Hekker, Katherine. “Women Are the Majority in Education, Yet Still Find Themselves Overlooked for Promotions and Making Less than Their Male Peers.” Business Insider, Business Insider, 2021, <https://www.businessinsider.com/women-teachers-administrators-gender-pay-gap-public-schools-education-2021-6>.

²⁵ Global Education Monitoring Report Team, and Audrey Azoulay. Deepening the Debate on Those Still Left behind Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. UNESCO, 2022.

²⁶ World Bank Group. “Tertiary Education, Academic Staff (% Female).” Tertiary Education, Academic Staff (% Female), World Bank Group, 2023, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.TCHR.FE.ZS?name_desc=false.

²⁷ Global Education Monitoring Report Team, and Audrey Azoulay. Deepening the Debate on Those Still Left behind Global Education Monitoring Report 2022: Gender Report. UNESCO, 2022.

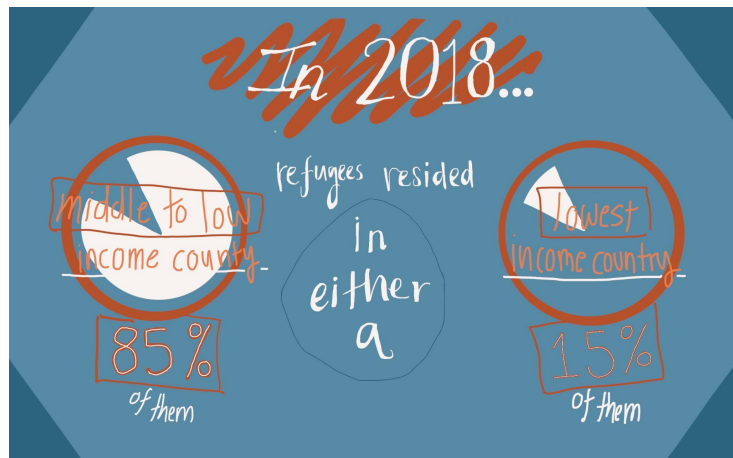
REFUGEE ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Chloe Fong

Education is a human right fundamental to a person's development, autonomy, and protection. Despite global efforts to enforce universal education, several challenges face this goal, such as gender inequality, socio-economic imbalance, and international conflicts, which lead to the displacement of children and young adults. In today's world, 7.1 million children are refugees. Of that total, 3.7 million are out of school.²⁸ For these children, the right to education is threatened by many factors, including lack of financial support, limited access to vital resources, dangerous environments, and lack of valid documentation. This article will explore the obstacles interfering with refugee access to education and the importance of such access.

Only 63% of refugee children are enrolled in primary school, compared to 91% of primary-age children worldwide. That percentage decreases for secondary school, with a mere 24% of refugee children enrolled. Secondary education costs more, requiring better materials, more qualified teachers, and specialized equipment. When it comes to higher education, expensive tuition can deter or exclude many refugee youths, especially when, in some host countries, they are required to pay higher international student rates. As a result, only 3% of refugees are enrolled in tertiary schools, marginal in contrast to the 34% of non-refugee students worldwide attending universities.²⁹ Such percentages highlight the stark consequences of displacement on the education of children.

Displacement frequently involves relocation to an under-resourced region, such as a large refugee camp with limited financial support and access to necessary materials. Studies have found that millions of refugees of schooling age exist in these financially depleted areas. In 2018, 85% of refugees were hosted by middle to low-income countries, while the remaining 15% resided in the lowest-income countries.³⁰ In many such areas, if a school does exist, it may need more vital resources, such as basic facilities (running water, proper electricity and sanitation) and school supplies.



Once out of camps, most refugees head for urban areas. Roughly 60% of the world's refugees now live in cities.³¹ In these urban places specifically, a good source of income is difficult to acquire for relocated refugees, as some are even denied the right to work. This is due either to a lack of documentation or a

²⁸ "MUN Refugee Challenge- Access to Education for Refugees." *The UN Refugee Agency*, www.unhcr.org/5df9f1767.pdf.

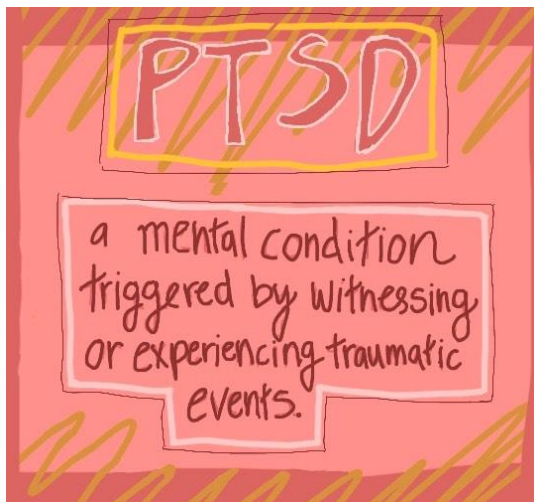
²⁹ Grandi, Filippo. "It's Time to Make Refugee Girls' Education a Priority." *Her Turn*, UN Refugee Agency, www.unhcr.org/herturn.

³⁰ "MUN Refugee Challenge- Access to Education for Refugees." *The UN Refugee Agency*, www.unhcr.org/5df9f1767.pdf.

³¹ Vos and Dempster. "Most Refugees Live in Cities, Not Camps." *Center for Global Development*, 28 Oct. 2021, www.cgdev.org/blog/most-refugees-live-cities-not-camps-our-response-needs-shift.

government's fear of decreasing wages, as locals may lose their jobs if refugees are at hand to do the work for less.³²

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 53% of registered refugee households live below the poverty line in their host countries before receiving humanitarian and financial assistance.³³ In some contexts, that percentage is even higher. For example, 90% of Syrian refugees live below the national poverty line in their host countries.³⁴ The disparities in refugee income levels contribute to the barriers to their education. Not only can financial stressors force refugee children to find jobs instead of going to school, but studies have also found that poverty disrupts academic performance in refugee youth by interfering with cognitive function. A study conducted by Yale University showed that the burden of household poverty weakened the working memory and inhibitory control of refugee youth, which by extension worsened academic ability.³⁵



In addition to worsened memories, many refugee youths suffer from another cognitive dysfunction known as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a mental condition triggered by witnessing or experiencing traumatic events which result in severe anxiety and cognitive confusion.³⁶ Due to the violence and persecution refugees are often exposed to before fleeing their countries (in most cases due to war), high rates of PTSD are observed, specifically in children. According to the United States National Library of Medicine, 10% of refugee adults have PTSD, compared to the 17% of refugee children.³⁷ PTSD interferes with language and communication skills, the ability to remember new information, and reading comprehension—all necessary

skills for learning. PTSD symptoms can take months or even years to subside, significantly disrupting the education of refugee youths with the condition.³⁸

Another factor complicating refugee access to education is the lack of documentation held by refugees needed for entrance into a new school. In the chaos of forced displacement, crucial documentation, such as birth certificates and educational records, may be left behind.

³² Clemens, Michael. "The Economic Effects of Granting Refugees Formal Labor Market Access." *Center for Global Development*, 9 Oct. 2018, www.cgdev.org/publication/economic-effects-granting-refugees

³³ Hanmer, Lucia, and Eliana Rubiano. "How Does Poverty Differ Among Refugees?" *Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement*, 2020, www.jointdatacenter.org/literature_review/how-does-poverty-differ-among-refugees-taking-a-gender-lens-to-the-data-on-syrian-refugees-in-jordan-3/.

³⁴ "Syria's Needs Are at Their Highest Ever." *UN News*, United Nations, 29 June 2022, www.google.com/url?q=https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/06/1121652&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1672355390505044&usg=AOvVaw015VXQyd48FYNN6UZI5Yhi.

³⁵ Cummings, Mike. "Study: Poverty, not Trauma, Affects Cognitive Function in Refugee Youth." *Yale News*, Yale University, 24 Oct. 2019, news.yale.edu/2019/10/24/study-poverty-not-trauma-affects-cognitive-function-refugee-youth.

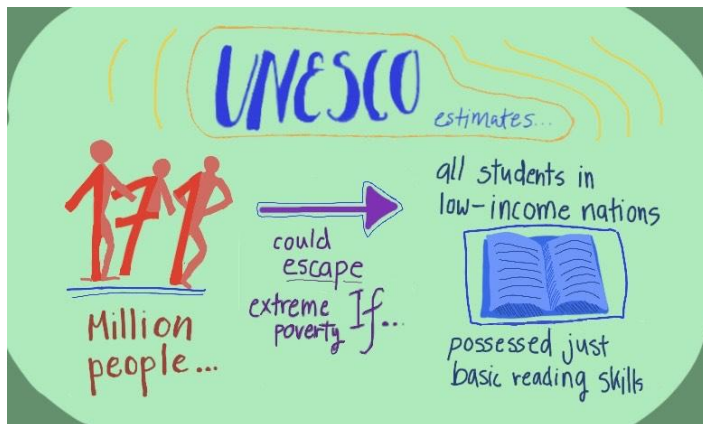
³⁶ "What is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder." *American Psychiatry Association*, www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/ptsd/what-is-ptsd.

³⁷ Fazel, Mina. "Prevalence of serious mental disorder in 7000 refugees resettled in western countries: a systematic review." *National Library of Medicine*, National Center for Biotechnology Information, pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15823380/.

³⁸ "What is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder." *American Psychiatry Association*, www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/ptsd/what-is-ptsd.

Even when refugees bring educational certification, it isn't always recognized as the proper requirement for entry into a school in a new country.³⁹ Schools may also not have enough academic documentation regarding a new refugee student, meaning the child would be placed into a grade according to age and not ability. This would disregard the lapse in the students' schooling and disadvantage them. Language also serves as a barrier for refugee students; educators may perceive refugee students as academically challenged simply because they cannot express themselves in the new language.⁴⁰

Pressure to attend to their families' vulnerabilities often discourages refugee youth from academic pursuits. As they grow older, refugee adolescents are often expected to support their households, especially once their linguistic skill exceeds their parents' by way of schooling. Girls are significantly affected by this obligation. At a secondary level, there are approximately seven refugee girls for every ten refugee boys enrolled. Household chores, such as collecting water or fuel and caring for relatives, mainly fall on young women. According to UNHCR, depending on cultural conventions and expectations, young refugee women may face additional pressure to marry early and start earning an income, which would likely discourage academic ambition.⁴¹



And yet, access to education is proven to have tremendous benefits for refugee students when it does occur. Going to school provides displaced youth with a sense of security and normalcy. Schools also connect displaced youth to social services and other support systems. As put by UNHCR, "Besides academic subjects, [refugees] can learn about basic health care and hygiene, citizenship, human rights, and where, how, and from whom to get help."⁴²

Moreover, educated children have a much higher chance of obtaining a steady income and lifting themselves and their families out of poverty. UNESCO estimates that 171 million people could escape extreme poverty if all students in low-income nations possessed just basic reading skills.⁴³

Education also benefits refugee girls by reducing their susceptibility to sexual/gender-based violence, exploitation, teenage pregnancy, and child marriage. Refugees, especially unaccompanied girls, are more vulnerable to such sexual misconduct. In sexual violence cases reported by refugees in 2018, 89% were

³⁹ "Back to School: Challenges and Strengths of Refugee Students." *Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Centers*, brycs.org/schools/back-to-school-challenges-and-strengths-of-refugee-students/#:~:text=Bullying%2C%20Teasing%2C%20and%20Discriminat%20on&text=Often%20such%20situations%20can%20escalate,to%20drop%20out%20of%20school.

⁴⁰ "MUN Refugee Challenge- Access to Education for Refugees." *The UN Refugee Agency*, www.unhcr.org/5df9f1767.pdf.

⁴¹ Grandi, Filippo. "It's Time to Make Refugee Girls' Education a Priority." *Her Turn*, UN Refugee Agency, www.unhcr.org/herturn.

⁴² Lee, Jenni. "5 Reasons to Care About Education for Refugees." *United Nations Foundation*, United Nations, 2016, <https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/5-reasons-to-care-about-education-for-refugees/#:~:text=Classrooms%20provide%20a%20safe%20space%20for%20children.&text=UNHCR%20says%2C%20%E2%80%9CBesides%20academic%20subjects,from%20whom%20to%20get%20help.%E2%80%9D>.

⁴³ Global Education Monitoring Report Team. "Education for people and planet: creating sustainable futures for all, Global education monitoring report." *UNESCO Digital Library*, United Nations, 2016, unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245752.

women.⁴⁴ Child marriage is one form of sexual misconduct to which refugee girls are vulnerable. UNESCO findings show that if all girls were to attend primary school, child marriage would decrease by 14%. If they all completed secondary school, the rate would fall by 64%.⁴⁵ UNESCO research further demonstrates that by completing just one more year of schooling, a girl's future income can increase by one-fifth, which would allow her to support her family and community financially.⁴⁶

Despite numerous challenges, the importance of education for refugees is paramount. Tremendous humanitarian, social, and economic benefits are connected to a refugee spot in a classroom. By ensuring the educational rights of today's refugees, we will be one step closer to a sustainable future.

⁴⁴ De Oliveira Araujo, Juliana. "Prevalence of sexual violence among refugees: a systematic review." *National Library of Medicine*, National Center for Biotechnology Information, 12 Sept. 2019, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6752644/.

⁴⁵ Grandi, Filippo. "It's Time to Make Refugee Girls' Education a Priority." *Her Turn*, UN Refugee Agency, www.unhcr.org/herturn.

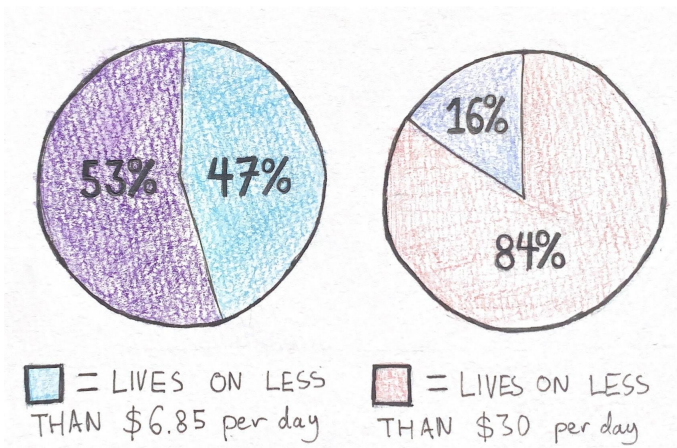
⁴⁶ "MUN Refugee Challenge- Access to Education for Refugees." *The UN Refugee Agency*, www.unhcr.org/5df9f1767.pdf.

SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITY AND EDUCATION

Aksaamai Ormonbekova

Poverty is a multicausal, complex issue that dominates much of the world's population. It is defined as the lack of sufficient funds which cover basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter. It is estimated that 47% of the world's population lives on less than \$6.85 per day, and 84% live on less than \$30 per day.⁴⁷ Poverty is caused by conflict, inadequate access to water, lack of access to employment, and climate

change. While such factors are significant in defining poverty, inequity, and poor education are other aspects that fuel poverty. Education is a powerful tool in preventing poverty as it is a very systemized factor of one's access to sufficient funds. Some define education as a portal to employment opportunities, skills, and resources that allow the educated to "not only survive but thrive."⁴⁸ Around 244 million children are kept out of schools and classrooms today.⁴⁹ Most of these children come from Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and South Asia, primarily consisting of Less Economically Developed Countries.



Many governments take little action to provide sufficient funds to public schools, resulting in poor academic performances and widening the divide between students who attend public schools and those who attend private schools. Public schools are state-funded institutions that are free for children in some countries to attend. In contrast, private schools are institutions that are funded by independent state entities and are costly to attend. There is a significant difference between the family income of a student attending a public school and the one attending a private school – with “huge benefits to being in private school.” The difference is fueled by the insufficient government funding that public schools receive, which inevitably leads to poor academic performance. In 2015, Southeast Asia spent some \$60 billion on private schools which enabled already well-educated and well-earning households to provide their children with enhanced private education. Lower-income families were left with underfunded state schools which widened the active educational inequality gap between the economic classes of this region.

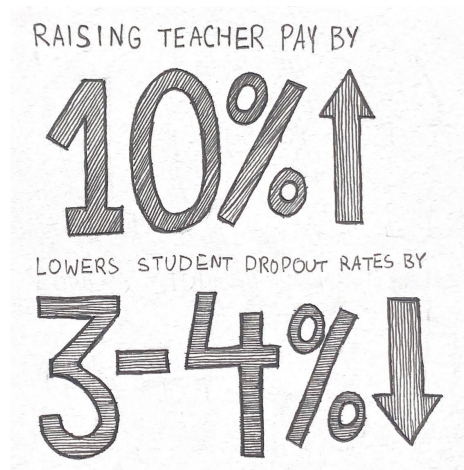
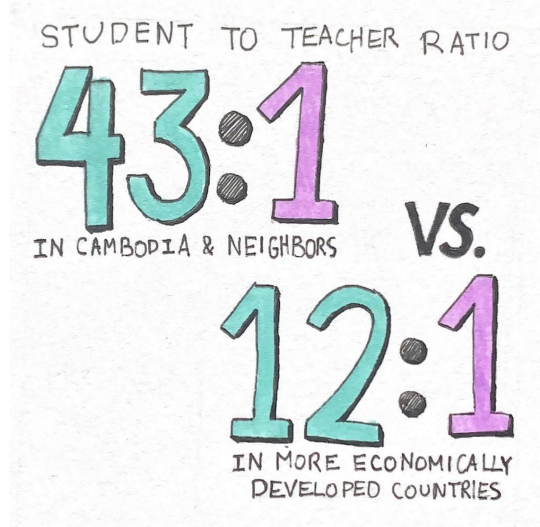
⁴⁷ World Bank. 2023 The World Bank Group, All Rights Reserved., 30 Nov. 2022, www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

⁴⁸ Giovetti, Olivia. "How Does Education Affect Poverty? It Can Help End It." Concern USA, 2023 Concern Worldwide U.S., 17 Apr. 2022, www.concernusa.org/story/how-does-education-affect-poverty/. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

⁴⁹ "UNESCO chief calls for transforming education, with 244 million still out of school." UN News, United Nations, 1 Sept. 2022, news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1125952#:~:text=The%20bell%20is%20ringing%20for,and%20Cultural%20Organization%20UNESCO). Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

Moreover, in 2017, Thailand investigated the poor performance of its students in public schools and concluded that “inequality” was the gravest problem. Malaysia, relating to Thailand’s crisis, similarly stated, “The way our education system is now, it tends to create two classes. The rich and the poor.”⁵⁰

Such funding disparities affect the resources which determine the quality of education in public schools. One critical factor in ensuring quality education is the appropriate salary per teacher, which is significantly low and comes from poor state funding of public schools. The average student-teacher ratio in Cambodia is 43 students to 1 teacher; the same ratio can be identified in its neighboring countries. This is a drastic difference from the More Economically Developed Countries, which usually have lower poverty rates and higher education quality; their student-teacher ratio averages around 12 students per teacher. The ratio plays a vital role in determining the quality of education as it is used to educate student success and engagement in class – the fewer the students per teacher, the easier it is for teachers to ensure that each student is on the right track.



Nevertheless, high student-teacher ratios result from insufficient teachers teaching in school, usually due to low salaries. In the case of Cambodia, teachers earn about \$200 per month, The Diplomat reported. Low salaries of teachers caused by poor funding are not unique to Southeast Asia. They can be identified in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia, where even today, the average number of students per teacher is 40. Low wages are not typical of LEDCs and can be experienced in the MEDCs. In the United States, teachers are paid an hourly wage of \$22 to \$33, which is not as rewarding as other professions in the academic field.

Many school systems fail to maintain staff and guarantee their students proper education. As a result, this increases social inequalities among private and public schools, and private and public students. Factors like sufficient teacher wages are important. Notably, one study found that raising teacher pay by just 10% lowers student dropout rates by 3- 4%.⁵¹

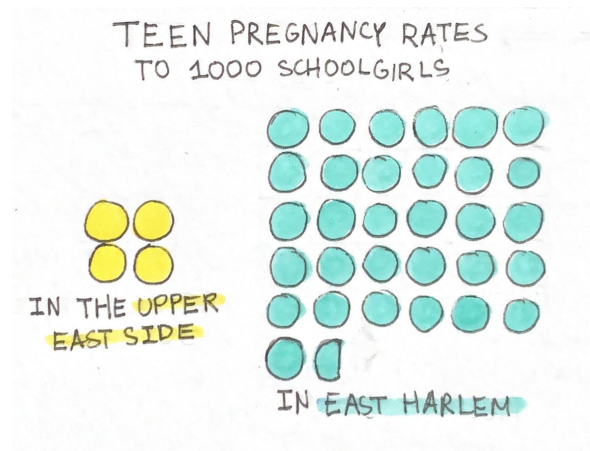
While poor funding of public schools touches many LEDCs, its existence in relation to poverty is very prevalent in MEDCs. The United States is home to 97,568 K-12 public schools as of 2021 which are

⁵⁰ Hutt, David. "Confronting Southeast Asia's Big Education Challenge." The Diplomat, 2023 Diplomat Media Inc. All Rights Reserved., 10 Oct. 2019, thediplomat.com/2019/10/confronting-southeast-asias-big-education-challenge/. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

⁵¹ Graham, Edward. "NEA Calls for an End to Unjust Teacher Pay Regulation." [nea-calls-end-unjust-teacher-pay-regulation](https://www.nea.org/2023/01/03/nea-calls-end-unjust-teacher-pay-regulation/). Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

annually underfunded by \$150 billion dollars.⁵² New York State was found to be experiencing the most inequitably distributed funding per public school.

One drastic difference between the neighboring districts is the number of pregnancies for schoolgirls aged 15 to 19. The Upper East Side's teen pregnancy ratio is 4 to 1000 schoolgirls, whereas in East Harlem, the ratio is 31.7 to 1000 schoolgirls.⁵³ This is an important indicator of poverty and socioeconomic inequality because sex education is less likely to be adequately taught in low-funded schools due to the lack of sufficient resources that work to prevent teen pregnancies. Teen pregnancies are strongly linked to poverty since a large portion of spending is on child healthcare rather than college funds. As a result, children born to teen moms are prone to experience low academic achievement, suffer from health problems and face incarceration.⁵⁴ In addition, a simple fact is that teen pregnancies can cause students to drop out of school, creating wider socioeconomic inequalities in such educational systems.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, low-income neighborhoods generate more teen pregnancies due to inadequate levels of sex education.



In addition, the public school funding is drastically different between the two districts, with schools on the Upper East Side spending about \$1349 per student while in East Harlem, \$329 to \$726 per student.⁵⁶ With such significant spending differences, schools cannot offer adequate education, resulting in low academic performance and the development of life skills – for example, sex education – where students grow up to compete in low-opportunity areas with low incomes. Lack of funding for education contributes to the relative poverty of East Harlem as opposed to the Upper East Side, one of the country's wealthiest neighborhoods.⁵⁷

Education, or lack thereof, is a principal determinant of poverty levels. Lack of funding for public schools is failing students worldwide, limiting them to a poor level of student-teacher interaction, unenhanced awareness of personal safety, and lower competency. This ultimately leads to inadequate higher education or no higher education at all, low-income jobs, and a higher risk of poverty.

⁵² Pannier, Bruce. "Central Asia: Back To School -- Parents Lacking For Cash (Part 1)." RFERL, 29 Aug. 2003, www.rferl.org/a/1104197.html. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

⁵³ Community Health Profiles 2015 (East Harlem). New York City, 2015 The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 2015.

⁵⁴ Hoffman SD. Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press; 2008

⁵⁵ Miquilena, María Eugenia, and Edgar Lara. "Teen Pregnancy as a Cause of School Dropout." Development Bank of Latin America, 2023 caf - All rights reserved, 18 Jan. 2021,

www.caf.com/en/knowledge/views/2021/01/teen-pregnancy-as-a-cause-of-school-dropout/#:~:text=Teen%20pregnancy%20compromises%20young%20girls,viole%2C%20crime%20and%20social%20exclusion. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

⁵⁶ "New York City School Spending Per Student." Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2012, www.newyorkfed.org/data-and-statistics/data-visualization/nyc-school-spending#interactive/map. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

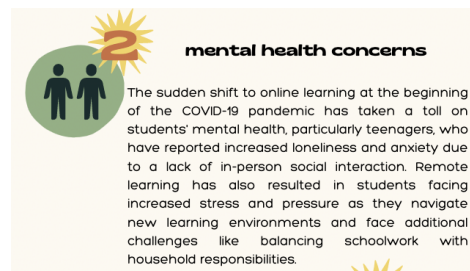
⁵⁷ Wikipedia contributors. "List of highest-income urban neighborhoods in the United States." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 29 Dec. 2022. Web. 4 Jan. 2023.

COVID-19'S IMPACT ON EDUCATION

Lissy Vinocur

The COVID-19 pandemic was a global shift politically, economically and socially. It shut down businesses and schools, forced families to separate and isolate and has taken the lives of 6,710,000 people.⁵⁸ The pandemic had an intense impact on students' learning, teachers' teaching methods and the school's general effectiveness. Online learning has enhanced education in some ways, making learning accessible from home and removing the risk factor of COVID infection.⁵⁹

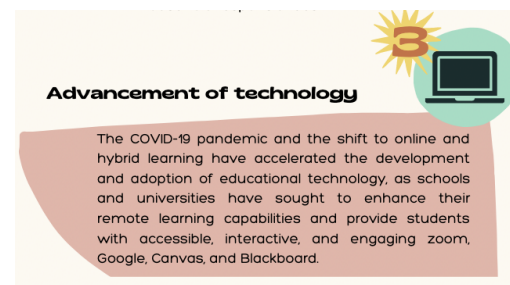
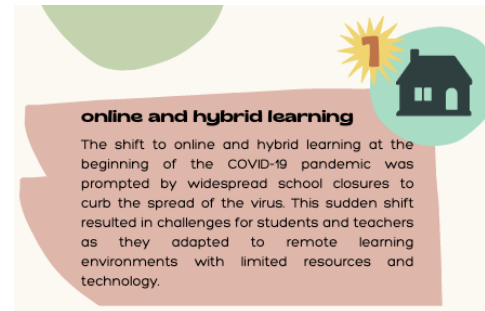
The need for the usage of technology during the height of the pandemic has developed available teaching technologies and the knowledge teachers have of technology. However, remote learning has its drawbacks. Particularly for younger students, online learning has shown a decrease in learning as demonstrated by lower test scores, grades and reading proficiency levels.⁶⁰ Online learning requires a high level of self-discipline and organization. In households where parents



cannot supervise their children during the day because of work, many children have experienced difficulty staying on track with their schoolwork and paying attention in class. The anonymity of online learning creates the opportunity for the child to become distracted. Finally, the mental health impacts of online schooling pre-hybrid learning are considerable. In hybrid learning, students go to school in person only two or three times a week to decrease exposure to COVID. However, during the

early months of the pandemic and as new surges of virus appeared, kids were forced to learn at home completely alone. Lack of social interaction made children learning during the COVID pandemic more susceptible to mental health problems. This applies especially to teenagers, who are already more likely to experience depression and anxiety and were hit primarily by the mental struggles that come with learning remotely.⁶¹

The pandemic and the need for new technology in the classroom has greatly advanced the effectiveness and accessibility of online learning. During the early months of the pandemic, when schooling was completely remote, platforms such as Zoom, Google, Canvas, and Blackboard became widely available and used for online lessons and



⁵⁸ "Coronavirus Death Toll." *Worldometer*, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/coronavirus-death-toll/>.

⁵⁹ Boyle, Patrick, and Senior Staff Writer. "Kids, School, and Covid-19: What We Know - and What We Don't." *AAMC*, 5 Nov. 2020, <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/kids-school-and-covid-19-what-we-know-and-what-we-don-t>.

⁶⁰ University, Stanford. "Reading Skills of Young Students Stalled during Pandemic." *Stanford News*, 9 Mar. 2021, <https://news.stanford.edu/2021/03/09/reading-skills-young-students-stalled-pandemic/>.

⁶¹ "National Library of Medicine - National Institutes of Health." *U.S. National Library of Medicine*, National Institutes of Health, <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/>.

assignments.⁶² In some places, schools relied on email and printable worksheets to get students to learn. Programs such as Google Classroom allowed teachers to organize their classes and provide resources for their students in addition to Zoom lessons. Students had daily lessons in accordance with their schedules and asynchronous assignments. Time management became an important factor of schooling, and posed a challenge for many. For the first time, students were required to manage their own time, often without the assistance of teachers and parents.



Online learning was not accessible in all countries due to unequal access to technology and internet connectivity, particularly in low-income and rural areas.

However, due to low internet connection, high rural-urban digital divide and high data rates, online learning is not available to all students. To combat this, many countries are encouraging continued learning through more widespread technology, such as TV or radio. With the help of organizations like UNICEF and the World Bank, countries such as Ghana have created accessible public broadcasting services for high school students.⁶³

Despite some benefits, online learning has shown a negative impact on the learning experience of children, especially those in grades K-5. Before the pandemic, children in poor households or with learning disabilities were considered at high risk for lower rates of reading proficiency. Pre-pandemic, the percentage of students who fell under this category was 29%, and has risen 8% since the beginning of the pandemic to 37%.⁶⁴ The same study by Amplify found that Black and Hispanic households were disproportionately affected by learning loss. According to the 2018 U.S. Census Data, Black and Hispanic people are the 2nd and 3rd most impoverished ethnicities in the U.S., after Native Americans. Especially during the pandemic, poor families in which the parents are forced to work outside of the home have less control over the study habits

of their children trying to learn through technology, less time to help their children work on skills being learned and less access to technology. In households where parents have the means to work from home or pay for extra tutoring or other learning services for their children, a smaller percentage of students showed a decrease in reading proficiency. As stated in a Stanford News article, “Results from a reading assessment given to first through fourth-graders nationwide show that the students’ development of oral reading fluency – the ability to quickly and accurately read aloud – largely stopped in spring 2020 after the abrupt school closures brought on by COVID-19.”⁶⁵



In countries such as Rwanda, Morocco, Egypt, and Nigeria, some universities and schools tried switching to online platforms, but it was not available to all students. To address this issue, several African nations are promoting continued education by disseminating technologies like television and radio.

⁶² Boyarsky, Katherine. “9 Of the Best Video Conferencing Hardware Tools to Use in Meetings.” *Owl Labs Blog*, <https://resources.owllabs.com/blog/video-conferencing-hardware>.

⁶³ “Radio Lessons: In Africa Schools Are Closed, but Learning Goes on | Africa Renewal.” *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/may-2020/coronavirus/africa-schools-are-closed-learning-goes>.

⁶⁴ Amplify | *High-Quality K–12 Curriculum and Assessments*.

https://amplify.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/mCLASS_MOY-Results_February-2022-Report.pdf.

⁶⁵ University, Stanford. “Reading Skills of Young Students Stalled during Pandemic.” *Stanford News*, 9 Mar. 2021, <https://news.stanford.edu/2021/03/09/reading-skills-young-students-stalled-pandemic/>.

50%

Did you know that, according to the data from EdWeek Research Center, 2021, 50% of students reported that they felt less motivated to participate in the first half of the school year back after the pandemic?

Another study conducted in Virginia, found that about 35 percent in the state scored below their expected levels in fall 2021.⁶⁶ Motivation and organization when learning also decreased during the pandemic. In a study conducted at Georgia State University, researchers found that only 45.1% of students said they were able to set time aside to focus on and do their schoolwork.⁶⁷ Despite teachers and students having overcome the learning curve of online learning, the 2020-2021 school year showed the long-term effects the beginning of the pandemic had on learning abilities.

Online learning was damaging both academically and mentally. The constant isolation of online learning and the separation from peers and teachers made many students, especially adolescents, depressed and anxious. Social distancing and school closures are likely to result in increased loneliness in children and adolescents.⁶⁸ Loneliness is directly linked to a rise in anxiety and depression. During a pandemic, which made normal human interactions a potential threat, the combined loneliness and stress was enough to take a toll on students' mental health. 24.7 and 31.3% of students said they were moderately or extremely concerned about contracting the virus, respectively. However, 90.1% of the students were concerned about the effects of COVID-19 on the health of close family members and friends. In extreme cases, children had to be completely separated from a high-risk family member to avoid infecting them. Although social isolation is not necessarily synonymous with loneliness, early indications in the COVID-19 context show that more than one-third of adolescents report high levels of loneliness and almost half of 18 to 24-year-olds are lonely during the lockdown.⁶⁹ In many African countries, where almost no educational instruction was given during early lockdowns, students reported similar feelings of depression, anxiety and loneliness. In these countries, staying home disproportionately impacted African girls, who are often culturally expected to do more household tasks. Given that students were learning online, burdened by the worry of infection and transmission of COVID, an increase in mental distress seems almost inevitable.

20% ... 29%

Did you know that, based on the data collected from the National Alliance on Mental Illness in California, 20% of college students say their mental health has worsened, nearly 3 in 10 (or 29%) of parents say that their child mental health is experiencing harm due to social distancing and isolation

COVID-19 had many different effects on the well-being and learning of students. It permanently changed how students learn by introducing new online-learning platforms and creating a hybrid school model. However, the long-term effects on mental health and reading proficiency and the inconsistency of online learning in certain countries demonstrate the need for in-person education.

⁶⁶ Boyarsky, Katherine. "9 Of the Best Video Conferencing Hardware Tools to Use in Meetings." *Owl Labs Blog*, <https://resources.owlabs.com/blog/video-conferencing-hardware>.

⁶⁷ Armstrong-Mensah, Elizabeth, et al. "Covid-19 and Distance Learning: Effects on Georgia State University School of Public Health Students." *Frontiers*, Frontiers, 18 Aug. 2020, <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2020.576227/full>.

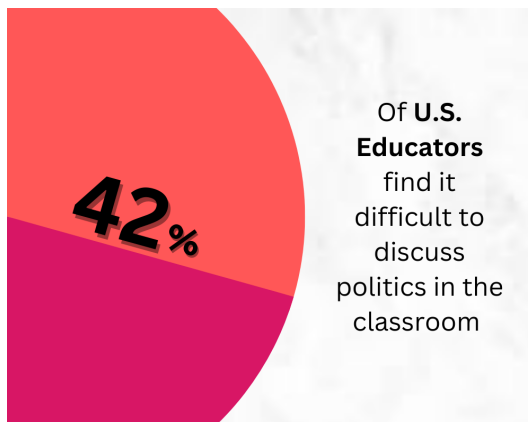
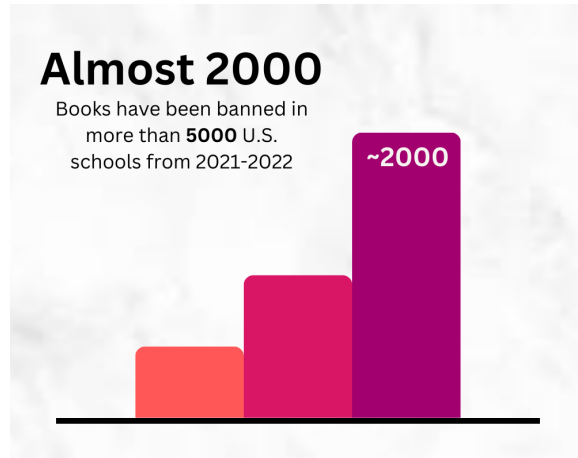
⁶⁸ "National Library of Medicine - National Institutes of Health." *U.S. National Library of Medicine*, National Institutes of Health, <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/>.

⁶⁹ Boyarsky, Katherine. "9 Of the Best Video Conferencing Hardware Tools to Use in Meetings." *Owl Labs Blog*, <https://resources.owlabs.com/blog/video-conferencing-hardware>.

PERSONAL BIAS IN THE CLASSROOM

Temisola Akinwande

Arguably, no issue has provoked more political and social discourse in recent years than that of what children are being taught in schools. Between 2021 and 2022, around 50 conservative groups and parent associations initiated the banning of almost 2000 books in more than 5000 US schools.⁷⁰ Many of these books featured main characters of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, and others were teaching material for concepts like Critical Race Theory. Questions and fears surrounding parental involvement in their children's education continue to provoke more uncertainty than consensus. The teachers are caught in the middle and are expected to devise curriculums and instruction programs void of their political, religious, or personal beliefs. While some may argue that teachers should not and cannot introduce controversial subjects or teach material through a personal lens, others would claim that this is inevitable in today's world.



Given the current political climate in the United States, school districts have taken different routes to manage political discussions. In South Dakota, for example, teachers are instructed not to say anything “political” that could set off heated arguments or aid them in advancing what some schools feared would be political agendas. This is incredibly challenging for teachers of history, religion, politics, and civics, who would be performing a dereliction of their duty as educators by not analyzing events like the January 6th Capitol attack in class.⁷¹ A 2017 Education Week survey found that 42% of US educators found it increasingly difficult to discuss politics in their

classrooms, even though the majority of respondents found it important to do so.⁷² Notwithstanding, whenever teachers share their own political views, students can be profoundly impacted; according to the magazine *Intelligent*, 72% of US college students claimed that professors expressing their political beliefs influenced and helped reshape their own views.⁷³ A study of history classes in a South Carolina high school and college concluded that although a large portion of pupils maintained their own views of the

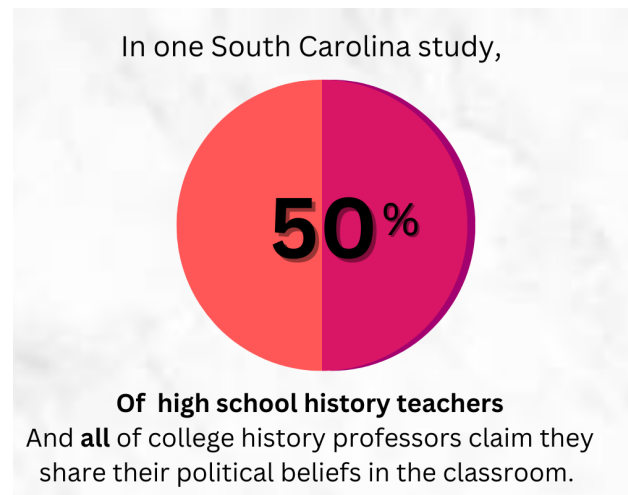
⁷⁰ Yurcaba, Jo. "More than 1,600 books banned during 2021-22 school year, report finds." *NBC News*, 19 Sept. 2022, www.nbcnews.com. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

⁷¹ West, Charlotte. "Should Teachers be Apolitical?" *The Hechinger Report*, 2 Feb. 2021, hechingerreport.org/should-teachers-be-apolitical/. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

⁷² Will, Madeline. "Survey: Teachers Talk Politics to Students, Despite Divisive Atmosphere." *Education Week*, 4 Apr. 2017, www.edweek.org/. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

⁷³ Intelligent.com Higher Education Team. "72% of College Students Believe Professors Influence Political Views." *Intelligent*, 29 Aug. 2022, www.intelligent.com. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

world, 77% of the high school students and 66% of the college students felt theirs were strengthened or refined. While only 17% of high school students claimed that their personal views were strengthened and they did not become more accommodating of other ideas, 35% expressed that they walked out of class more open-minded after debating with their teachers and listening to their opinions.⁷⁴ Similarly, 11% of college students claimed they remained unconvinced of their teachers' or classmates' opinions, while 35% said they could change their views completely when engaging in classroom debates. Moreover, 50% of the high school teachers and all of the college professors in the study claimed that they share their own political views with their students. They all deemed it beneficial to engage in healthy and open discourse with their students. All the college professors believed it was their right to express their personal views in class, though only half of the high school teachers felt likewise. Whether or not the impact is fruitful or detrimental to students, it is clear that teachers often feel obliged to impart their personal understanding of current political events.



Similar to politics, religion is a subject that teachers are often advised to avoid.⁷⁵ Nonetheless, personal faith and spirituality, or a lack thereof, are integral aspects of one's identity. Therefore, when teachers are told to leave their faith out of the classroom, conflicts can arise. It is not uncommon—and increasingly accepted nowadays—to see educators openly wearing jewelry or clothing that represents their religious beliefs, such as a hijab or a Christian cross.⁷⁶ Even though many teachers of religion try to adopt a neutral approach, their personal beliefs on the subject matter influence how they teach it, as a study in Northern Ireland showed.⁷⁷ Public schools in Northern Ireland are mandated to teach World Religions, a course that covers the most practiced and historically influential religions around the globe. According to the researchers, ten of the eleven World Religions teachers they examined presented facts in ways that aligned almost entirely with their Christian faith (all except one belonged to a Christian background) despite their insistence on impartiality and acceptance of all the faiths they taught to their students. This was done both consciously and unconsciously; while some provided personal anecdotes to spark discussion and enrich the learning experience, others would spend more time teaching about Christianity, often emphasizing what they viewed to be its values. Two teachers compared Christianity to other religions, marking it as the blueprint, particularly against Judaism and Islam. They claimed that this eased understanding of other faiths as Christianity was most familiar to pupils in Northern Ireland. One educator would encourage her students to read the Bible as further confirmation of her ideas, while another expressed that his main mission was to see that his students realize what he considered to be the misguidedness of non-Christian

⁷⁴ Camp, Abigail. "Politics in the Classroom: How the Exposure of Teachers' Political Views Impacts Their Students." *Journal of Student Research*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2020 Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

⁷⁵ Armanious, Joseph. *The Effects of Teachers' Personal Religious and Spiritual Beliefs on Classroom Practices*. 2019. California State University, PhD dissertation. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

⁷⁶ Pew Research Center. "Religion in the Public Schools." *Pew Research Center*, 3 Oct. 2019, www.pewresearch.org. Accessed 8 Jan. 2023.

⁷⁷ Nelson, James, and Yang, Yue. "The role of teachers' religious beliefs in their classroom practice? a personal or public concern?" *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13617672.2022.2125672>. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

faiths. Whether explicitly or implicitly, these educators used their belief in Christianity as the foundation upon which they directed their lessons.

Teachers are charged with the responsibility to stick to what is widely accepted as facts and let students formulate their own conclusions. Given the seismic events of our time, this has evolved into the idea that teachers should remain apolitical or should not expose personal thoughts on serious issues. Whereas some may feel that teachers who express their own views on tough subjects are trying to coerce students into sharing their opinions, others believe it is a core element of the educational process.⁷⁸ By encouraging students to engage in healthy debate, including with teachers who may not share their opinions, they learn to listen to and respect different views and experiences. It shows them that their teachers are actively challenging and scrutinizing what they are teaching, which motivates their pupils to do the same when they are provided with new information. On the other hand, the influence of teachers on students' religious and political beliefs entirely contradicts the essence of schooling, which is simply to enlighten young people and not impose doctrines on them.

As with all social and political settings, the fine line between free speech and inflammatory rhetoric in classrooms has yet to be drawn and agreed upon. Countless incidents have occurred where teachers voicing their thoughts on difficult issues disclosed questionable assumptions they held. While engaging in discussion with his multiethnic middle school advisory class in Texas, a teacher remarked that he was ethnocentric because he supported the belief that his ethnic group—White Americans—was superior to others.⁷⁹ Several students accused the teacher of blatant racism, while the school fired him for what they felt was an “inappropriate conversation.” Such events present another intricacy in whether teachers sharing their political views with students should be shunned or endorsed—and justify enforcing the latter.

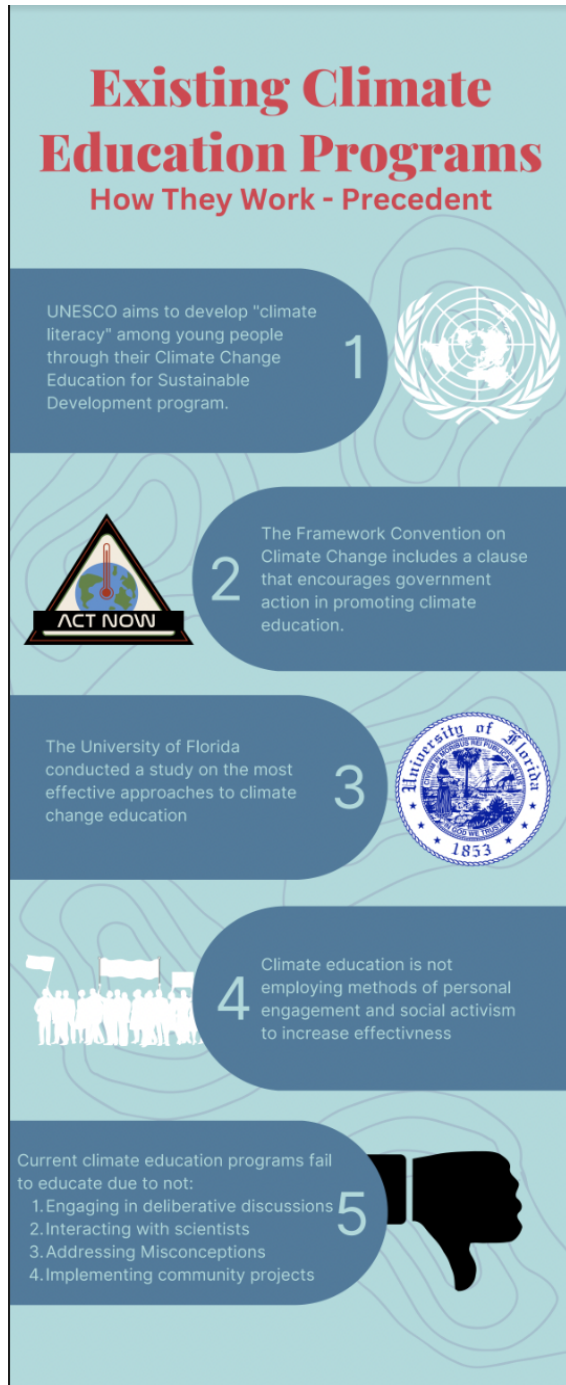
It is evident now more than ever that it is difficult for personal beliefs to remain outside classroom walls. Facts in and of themselves may be indisputable. Still, as long as individuals, communities, and structures are involved in gathering, propagating, dissecting, and teaching them, education shall continue to be a political question. Inevitably, therefore, it shall remain a personal one.

⁷⁸ Abramsky, Jessica. "Should teachers express personal viewpoints with students?" *The Torch*, 16 Oct. 2020, ohtorch.com. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

⁷⁹ Babineau, Andi. "White teacher in Texas fired after telling students his race is 'the superior one.'" *CNN*, 15 Nov. 2022, www.cnn.com. Accessed 19 Dec. 2022.

CLIMATE EDUCATION

Jayden Link



To combat the challenge of climate change, education is a key tool. Students can learn about the effects of global warming and how to adjust to climate change in the classroom. To convey what it means to be a child growing up in the age of fast climate change, UNICEF has tapped into the minds and imaginations of kids worldwide. UNESCO also seeks to "assist people to comprehend the impact of global warming today and develop "climate literacy" among young people" through its Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development program.⁸⁰

Increased interest in climate change education and a growing recognition of the challenges involved in combating climate change has led to a systematic review to understand what research can contribute to ideas about effective climate change education. The University of Florida conducted one study in which two themes most common to environmental education were identified: focusing on the personally relevant and meaningful information and using active and engaging teaching methods.

Beyond these, four themes specific to issues such as climate change were also generated and published by the university: engaging in deliberative discussions, interacting with scientists, addressing misconceptions, and implementing school or community projects.⁸¹ These themes are present throughout climate education globally.

Many student misconceptions exist about the causes of global warming and its relationship with ozone depletion. Most students connect global warming only with visible pollution, such as exhaust from a car or factory, while discounting more indirect emissions,

⁸⁰ "Education Is Key to Addressing Climate Change." United Nations, United Nations,

<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/climate-solutions/education-key-addressing-climate-change>.

⁸¹ "Identifying Effective Climate Change Education Strategies: A Systematic Review of the Research." Taylor & Francis,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13504622.2017.1360842?scroll=top&needAccess=true&role=tab>.

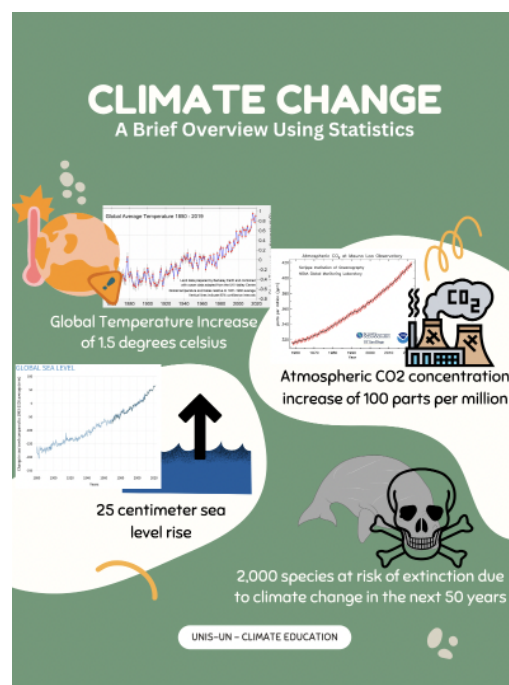
such as from electricity use and through product or food consumption. Studies suggest that employing methods of personal engagement and social activism be further developed to aid in the teaching of climate change in school curricula.⁸²

The Framework Convention on Climate Change has a subclause that urges governments to take action toward thorough climate education. It states, “Promote and cooperate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change and encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organizations.” The UN urges that governments take the suggestions of this provision into account while creating climate education curricula and legislation.⁸³

Support for climate change education is strong across the political spectrum in Europe and among Democrats in the United States. With over 97 percent of climate scientists agreeing on the basics, climate change is as solid as any topic presented in US K–12 science education. However, the Republican party in the United States almost entirely opposes the inclusion of climate education.⁸⁴ Nominally "scientific" arguments against taking anthropogenic climate change seriously have been publicized to reach informed and ideologically receptive audiences in the United States.⁸⁵

Lynne Zummo, a Ph.D. candidate at Stanford and former high school teacher and geology researcher, has expressed the importance of political consideration when discussing climate change. “People's opinions about climate change are often very political, which is a significant problem for science educators,” said Zummo. When discussing climate change, an emotional response is equally vital. Even without considering politics, it is easy for people to become overwhelmed with fear and helplessness, and some young people even react with anger, as seen in the climate strikes.⁸⁶

Despite several decades of research on how to communicate more effectively about climate change to the general public, there is only a limited amount of knowledge about how young people engage with an issue that will shape and define their generation. This has become a concern for many political leaders while implementing curricula related to climate education.⁸⁷ A study used multilevel models fitted to data collected in 2016 on 42,401 individuals in 23 European countries to examine the beliefs on



⁸² Cordero, Eugene C., et al. “Climate Change Education and the Ecological Footprint.” AMETSOC, American Meteorological Society, 1 June 2008, https://journals.ametsoc.org/view/journals/bams/89/6/2007bams2432_1.xml.

⁸³ “Education Is Key to Addressing Climate Change.” United Nations, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/climate-solutions/education-key-addressing-climate-change>.

⁸⁴ McKenzie, Jessica. “Americans Want Climate Change Taught in Schools. Political Parties Aren't so Sure.” Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 7 Dec. 2022, <https://thebulletin.org/2022/12/americans-want-climate-change-taught-in-schools-political-parties-arent-so-sure/>.

⁸⁵ Cordero, Eugene C., et al. “Climate Change Education and the Ecological Footprint.” AMETSOC, American Meteorological Society, 1 June 2008, https://journals.ametsoc.org/view/journals/bams/89/6/2007bams2432_1.xml.

⁸⁶ University, Stanford. “Climate Change Politics in the High School Classroom.” Stanford News, 22 Apr. 2020, <https://news.stanford.edu/2020/04/21/climate-change-politics-high-school-classroom/>.

⁸⁷ How Do Young People Engage with Climate Change ... - Wiley Online Library. <https://wires.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/wcc.353>.

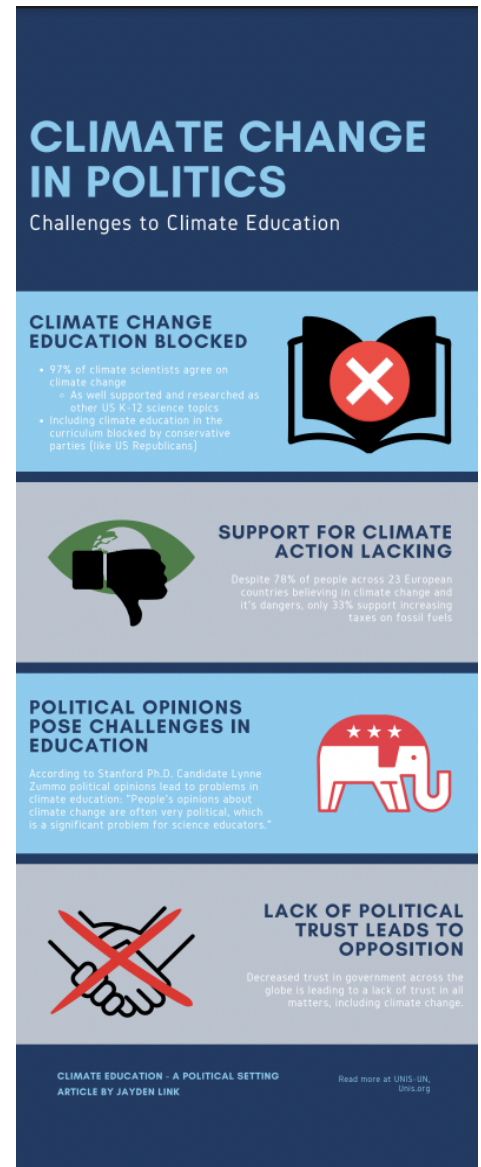
climate education in Europe. Most Europeans (78%) believe in anthropogenic climate change and its dangers. However, only a minority (33%) support increasing taxes on fossil fuels. Beliefs predict support among individuals and countries with high political trust. Among those with low political trust, beliefs are unrelated to tax support. These results suggest a need for more education on political matters, which affects the efficacy of what can be done about climate change and climate education from a governmental standpoint.⁸⁸

Experts have said that it is not possible to teach about climate change properly without discussing both its natural and anthropogenic causes.⁸⁹ This is an important factor to consider as the science behind climate change is complicated and evolving, and most teachers aren't prepared to teach it well. Many textbooks don't address the topic, according to science educators. Climate change can enter the classroom in a manner other than education, such as children raising the alarm on climate change and calling for action through lawsuits and school walkouts.⁹⁰

Sustainable development is an issue for nations, companies, and organizations sensitive to resource overuse. Through international initiatives, institutions will be given guidelines for socially responsible behavior. An initiative has been launched in the United States and Canada to seek best practices in this area and gather the information that will help in the development of a social responsibility manual specifically tailored for higher education institutions.⁹¹

In the United States, an initiative titled "Build Green Schools" and its website have been launched to provide environmentally friendly, energy-efficient school construction. This includes profiles of green schools, examples of policies that governments and school districts have instituted to encourage green practices, and other resources and links.⁹²

Four cutting-edge secondary schools teach their students about sustainable practices. These schools use modeling as a strategy for education concerning sustainability, encouraging both the study of sustainability and the adoption of sustainable behaviors in these schools. Individual role models, school operations, governance, and



⁸⁸ Preston, Caroline. "Teaching Global Warming in a Charged Political Climate." *The Hechinger Report*, 30 Mar. 2020, <https://hechingerreport.org/teaching-global-warming-in-a-charged-political-climate/>.

⁸⁹ University, Stanford. "Climate Change Politics in the High School Classroom." *Stanford News*, 22 Apr. 2020, <https://news.stanford.edu/2020/04/21/climate-change-politics-high-school-classroom/>.

⁹⁰ Preston, Caroline. "One State Mandates Teaching Climate Change in Almost All Subjects – Even Pe." *The Hechinger Report*, 7 Nov. 2022, <https://hechingerreport.org/one-state-mandates-teaching-climate-change-in-almost-all-subjects-even-pe/>.

⁹¹ The stars system." Ramon Llull *Journal of Applied Ethics*, vol. 1, no. 1, Jan.-Dec. 2010, p. 25. Gale In Context: Global Issues, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A243046272/GIC?u=nysl_me_unintl&sid=bookmark-GIC&xid=cc33947c.

⁹² "Meaningful Connections." *Endeavor Business Media*, <https://www.endeavorbusinessmedia.com/>.

culture are the four main ways that schools demonstrate sustainability. These modeling strategies will most likely be beneficial to other institutions that are interested in sustainability education.⁹³

Educational methods of reinforcing healthy human passion—which reflects the desire and motivation for a compassionate and peaceful world—are necessary if we are to connect the entire planet to paths of sustainability and reduce conflict for both ourselves and one another. With this freshly realized human enthusiasm for true sustainability, we must teach. To reaffirm and remind people that “in order to get us to that shared, thriving, sustainable planet together, we are all one species socially and biologically bound by that loving passion and very much dependent on our diverse cultures and different bits of intelligence and ways of seeing and being.”⁹⁴

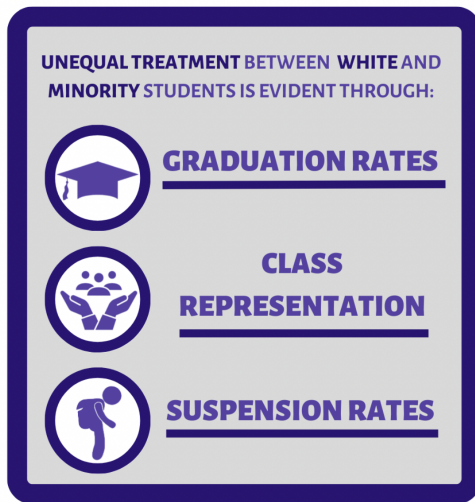
⁹³ “Teaching through Modeling: Four Schools' Experiences in Sustainability Education.” Taylor & Francis, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3200/JOEE.38.1.39-53>.

⁹⁴ “UN Chronicle.” United Nations, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle>.

RACE AND EDUCATION

Nina Rhode

In 1954, *Brown vs. the Board of Education* legally outlawed segregation within schools in the United States. However, like many policies that disadvantaged and discriminated against people of color for decades, the effects of these policies are still felt more subtly today. Studies and statistics provide evidence for the differences in treatment between white and minority students, such as disproportionate



rates of punishment and suspensions for students of color, lower graduation rates, and lower rates of representation in gifted and advanced programs.⁹⁵ The cause of these statistics remains contested, but many attribute them to a more subtle manner of discrimination, dubbed systemic or structural racism. As defined by Paula A. Braveman, “Systemic and structural racism are forms of racism that are pervasively and deeply embedded in and throughout systems, laws, written or unwritten policies, entrenched practices, and established beliefs and attitudes that produce, condone, and perpetuate widespread unfair treatment of people of color.”⁹⁶ Through the lens of education, structural racism is the underlying biases and practices enforced by administrations of educational institutions. Although this is a global issue, its effects are most prevalent in the United States, parts of South America and western Europe. The

issue is most documented in the United States, where a history of racial discrimination has contributed to increased amounts of awareness. Equality within education has improved since the Civil Rights Movement, but continued disparities in punishment, quality of education and opportunity have resulted in poorer outcomes and greater disadvantages for non-Asian students of color.

In 2019, 89% of white students graduated high school, while only 80% of black students and 82% of Hispanic students did.⁹⁷ Similarly, in 2021 just under 70% of white students enrolled in college immediately following high school, while only 55% of Black students and 60% of Hispanic students did. Researchers have come up with several reasons why Black and Hispanic students graduate high school and enroll in college at a lower rate because a collection of external factors often drives these decisions. The first is school segregation. Although school segregation is not legally acceptable, the manipulation of district lines has contributed to increasingly segregated public schools.⁹⁸ Most children attend public elementary and high schools and are required to attend those in their neighborhood. However, a long history of neighborhood segregation has led to a very high percentage of schools having a student body made up of 50% or more of one race.⁹⁹ The neighborhoods in which Black and Hispanic students make up

⁹⁵ Thompson, Eustace G. “Addressing Institutional Structural Barriers to Student Achievement.”

⁹⁶ Paula A. Braveman, Elaine Arkin, Dwayne Proctor, Tina Kauh, and Nicole Holm. “Systemic And Structural Racism: Definitions, Examples, Health Damages, And Approaches To Dismantling”

⁹⁷ U.S. Department of Education. “Report on the Condition of Education 2022”.

⁹⁸ Carrillo, Sequoia, and Pooja Salhotra. “U.S. schools remain highly segregated, government report finds.”

⁹⁹ Chang, Alvin. “We can draw school zones to make classrooms less segregated. This is how well your district does.”

most of the population are also often underfunded and do not have access to the same resources that wealthier neighborhoods receive, leading to an overall more monogamous and unequal public school system.

The second reason is biased administration and teachers and lack of access to high school courses necessary to prepare for higher education. Psychological studies show that Black students are 54% less likely to be enrolled in gifted and AP programs, due to a bias that teachers have about the inherent probability of a Black student being academically gifted.¹⁰⁰ According to American studies, 38% of Black and Latino students have access to AP programs, but only 29% of students take them, alluding to a lack of representation and access to programs that more rigorously prepare students for higher education. Similarly, a governmental study in 2012 found that only 57% of Black students have access to all the courses necessary to be prepared for college, which is significantly less than 71% of white students and 81% of Asian American students.¹⁰¹ This lack of representation and enrollment based on racism and racial bias contributes to an achievement disparity between minority and white students. Not only are black students less likely to be recognized as gifted students due to the psychological and implicit bias of teachers, but their schools often do not provide the necessary classes to pursue higher education and a brighter future. AP and gifted courses are attributed to increasing chances of enrolling in universities and achieving well-paying jobs, and because minority students are not registered or do not have access to these courses as much as white students, this contributes to the continued wealth gap between white and minority populations.¹⁰²

Another way that racism presents itself in the education system is the way that punishment and discipline disproportionately affect black and Hispanic students. Black and Latino students in the United States are significantly more likely to be suspended, referred to police, or arrested in school. Based on studies of preschool students in the United States, it has been found that Black students are up to 3.8 times more



likely to receive out-of-school suspensions in comparison to white students. This shows that even in preschool, when students are just entering school, racism and racial bias impacts student experiences. This is an issue because out-of-school suspensions take away time in school and affect the learning outcomes of students and their eventual academic achievement. Following devastating school shootings in the early 2000s, United States government officials sought to quell school violence by promoting police presence and a zero-tolerance policy in schools.^{103, 104} By 2017, 30% of schools had sworn police officers regulating their hallways. Following this increase in police presence, school administrations began involving law

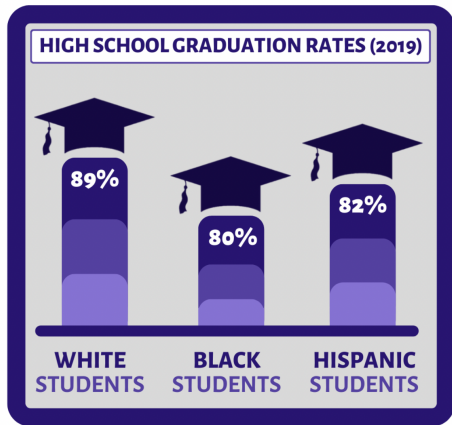
¹⁰⁰ Weir, Kirsten. "Inequality at school."

¹⁰¹ United Negro College Fund. "K-12 Disparity Facts and Statistics."

¹⁰² Thompson, Eustace G. "Addressing Institutional Structural Barriers to Student Achievement."

¹⁰³ Ward, Stephanie Francis, and James Podgers. "Racial Imbalance Feeds School-to-Prison Pipeline."

¹⁰⁴ School of Education. "Who is Most Affected by the School to Prison Pipeline?"



enforcement in disciplinary practices usually overseen by counselors and those who had qualifications for dealing with children. This impacted students negatively because offenses with drugs or violence that would have been overseen and resolved by child professionals now resulted in arrests and referrals to the juvenile prison system. School law enforcement is an issue of its own, but its impact on minority students exemplifies racial biases and how they affect students. Overall enrollment in United States schools is made up of 50% white students, 16% Black students, and 24.7% Hispanic students. However, 33% of all students who are arrested and 26% of students who are referred to the police in school are Black.¹⁰⁵

Referral to law enforcement in childhood gives students a criminal record, which makes it more difficult to get a job, attend school, attain housing, and achieve success later in life. Black students are referred to law enforcement and arrested at a higher rate, creating more barriers for success and widening the wealth gap. The unequal effect of school police on Black students has become another example of how structural racism affects students everyday life. All in all, racism is a prominent issue in the education of students worldwide.

¹⁰⁵ Education Week. "Policing America's Schools: An Education Week Analysis."

RIGHTS OF EDUCATORS

Dylan Mills

A prerequisite for the accomplishment of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education is target 4c, which seeks to “substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers” worldwide.¹⁰⁶ UNESCO reports that an increase of at least 69 million teachers globally is required to reach the goal of universal basic education by 2030.¹⁰⁷ Tragically, the world is seeing slow growth in the number of teachers, with some countries even seeing staggering declines. The U.S. alone is seeing annual turnover rates of roughly 13% in the profession.¹⁰⁸ Experienced teachers are leaving in droves, and enrollment in programs for new teachers is at all-time lows. The supply of teachers simply has not been enough to meet the world’s demand for quality education. This trend, however distressing, is not surprising. The teaching profession has been undervalued and undersupported for far too long. The mistreatment of teachers has left them without the proper resources or respect they need to teach their students. As Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director General said, “There is an urgent need to recognize better [the education] profession on which the future of our children depends.”¹⁰⁹



While the general public may not fully understand the true scope of this problem, the most recognized way teachers are mistreated is their inadequate pay. UNESCO data shows that 60% of countries pay teachers less than their similarly qualified counterparts. This figure jumps to more than 80% in high-income countries.¹¹⁰ It’s no surprise, then, that the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) details that “only 39% of teachers report satisfaction with their salary.”¹¹¹ In the U.S., this problem is only getting worse, as the “teacher wage penalty” -the amount that public school teachers are paid less than other college graduates- has seen steady growth in the past two-and-a-half decades. This penalty has grown from 6.1% to 23.5% from 1996 to 2021.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ “Goal 4 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 2022, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4#>.

¹⁰⁷ Clare, O’Hagan. “World Teachers’ Day: UNESCO Sounds the Alarm on the Global Teacher Shortage Crisis.” UNESCO.org, 4 Oct. 2022, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/world-teachers-day-unesco-sounds-alarm-global-teacher-shortage-crisis>.

¹⁰⁸ “On The Path To Equity: Improving The Effectiveness Of Beginning Teachers.” Alliance for Excellent Education, July 2014, <https://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/PathToEquity.pdf>. Accessed Jan. 2023.

¹⁰⁹ “World Teachers’ Day: UNESCO Sounds Alarm on Global Teacher Shortage Crisis.” Mirage News, Mirage News, 5 Oct. 2022, <https://www.miragenews.com/world-teachers-day-unesco-sounds-alarm-on-868486/>.

¹¹⁰ Clare, O’Hagan. “World Teachers’ Day: UNESCO Sounds the Alarm on the Global Teacher Shortage Crisis.” UNESCO.org, 4 Oct. 2022, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/world-teachers-day-unesco-sounds-alarm-global-teacher-shortage-crisis>.

¹¹¹ Schleicher, Andreas. “TALIS2018 Insights and Interpretations.” Teaching and Learning International Survey 2018 Insights and Interpretations, OECD, 2020, https://www.oecd.org/education/talis/TALIS2018_insights_and_interpretations.pdf. Accessed Jan. 2023.

¹¹² Allegretto, Sylvia. “The Teacher Pay Penalty Has Hit a New High: Trends in Teacher Wages and Compensation through 2021.” Economic Policy Institute, 16 Aug. 2022,

There are up to 52 students per teacher in primary schools in some low-income nations.

These low wages are coupled with poor working conditions and little administrative support. Class sizes are rising, with up to 52 students per primary school teacher in low-income countries - which means much more work per teacher. A 2019 survey from the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) in England reported that 85% of the teacher participants were greatly concerned about “excessive” workload in their profession.¹¹³

Teachers’ work is also highly stressful. One U.S. study from 2017 found that a staggering 93% of participants reported high levels of work-related stress.¹¹⁴ Another 2017 study co-produced by the American Federation of Teachers and the Badass Teachers Association writes that educators and educational staff find their work stressful a majority of the time, with 38% of respondents finding their work “often stressful” and almost a quarter of respondents finding their work “always stressful.” The same study identifies that 13%, 16%, and 32% of teachers do not feel respected by their students, supervisors, and school board, respectively.¹¹⁵ TALIS 2018 indicates that the quality of working conditions is a strong predictor of teacher attrition worldwide, meaning that improving conditions for teachers is paramount to combating teacher turnover.

In the US,
there has been an annual
teacher turnover rate of
around 13%.

Teachers face stress, overworking, and low pay.

The most troubling issue, however, is the erosion of the status of teaching as a profession. Teachers see their job as undervalued by society and by government policymakers who are seen as attempting to make teaching increasingly generalized and reducing teaching to what some have described as an “automated” process. Countries like the United States, Mexico, and Japan emphasize high-stakes standardized testing, which brings with them the necessity for teachers to stick to strict curriculums and teaching methods. Some schools even institute “merit-based” pay based on

<https://www.epi.org/publication/teacher-pay-penalty-2022/#:~:text=Over%20these%20nearly%20two%20decades,has%20worsened%20considerably%20over%20time>.

¹¹³ Big Question Report 2019 (England) - NASUWT. 2019,

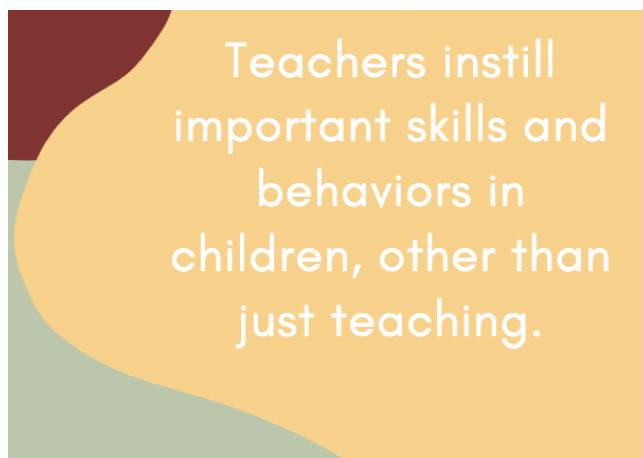
<https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/static/uploaded/981c20ce-145e-400a-805969e777762b13.pdf>.

¹¹⁴ Herman, K. C., Hickmon-Rosa, J., & Reinke, W. M. (2018). Empirically Derived Profiles of Teacher Stress, Burnout, Self-Efficacy, and Coping and Associated Student Outcomes. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 20(2), 90–100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300717732066>

¹¹⁵ 2017 Educator Quality of Life Survey. American Federation of Teachers, Badass Teachers Association, 2017.

https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/media/2017/2017_eqwl_survey_web.pdf

student performance in these standardized tests.¹¹⁶ Policies like these limit teachers' decisions about how they teach and strip them of their professional identities. As Wendy Poole, Professor at UBC, states, “Teachers’ work, once conceived as requiring high discretion and autonomy, is increasingly reduced to technical-rational conceptions of teaching, and teachers are increasingly viewed as technicians.”¹¹⁷ The 2021 Education International report on the Global Status of Teachers and the Teaching Profession outlines further that new educational policies deprive teachers of their professional autonomy, indicating that “An intelligent professional agenda requires a collective, joint negotiated plan with the profession.”¹¹⁸ The report calls for a complete incorporation of teachers into the development of educational practices instead of being perceived as a mere mechanism through which education takes place. As Robert Bruno of Harvard Business Reviews puts it, “Teachers perceive themselves and their students being treated as fungible costs of production, cogs in a bureaucratic machine.”¹¹⁹



The percentage of U.S. parents who want their children to become teachers is at an all-time low of 37%, with low wages, poor working conditions, and lack of respect all cited as the top reasons. This aligns exactly with why teachers say they’re leaving the workforce. If we want to solve worldwide teacher shortages and achieve SDG 4 by 2030, we need to start seeing the teaching crisis not as a logistics issue but as a human issue. We can’t treat teachers as money-in-learning-out machines. A 2013 survey from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation outlines that 99% of teachers agree

that teaching is about not just academics but also “reinforcing good citizenship, resilience and social skills.”¹²⁰ As the sources show, we all stand to gain from treating teaching better and repaying them for their challenging and essential work.

¹¹⁶ Salaky, Kristin. “What Standardized Tests Look like in 10 Places around the World.” Insider, Insider, 5 Sept. 2018, <https://www.insider.com/standardized-tests-around-the-world-2018-9>.

¹¹⁷ Wendy L. Poole (2008) Intersections of organizational justice and identity under the new policy direction: important understandings for educational leaders, *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 11:1, 23-42, DOI: 10.1080/13603120701663478

¹¹⁸ Thompson, Greg, and Josiah Taru. “The Global Report on the Status of Teachers 2021.” Education International, 25 Mar. 2022, <https://www.ei-ie.org/en/item/25403:the-global-report-on-the-status-of-teachers-2021>.

¹¹⁹ Bruno, Robert. “When Did the U.S. Stop Seeing Teachers as Professionals?” Harvard Business Review, 20 June 2018, <https://hbr.org/2018/06/when-did-the-u-s-stop-seeing-teachers-as-professionals>.

¹²⁰ “20,000 Teachers Provide Powerful Insights on Teaching in an Era of Change in New Primary Sources Survey.” Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 25 Feb. 2014, <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/Ideas/Media-Center/Press-Releases/2014/02/20000-Teachers-Provide-Powerful-Insights-on-Teaching-in-an-Era-of-Change>.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Adi Zavatzky

Special education is a distinct and unique schooling system that meets the specific needs of children with emotional, behavioral, and physical disabilities. Special education is individualized, following their philosophy that each child and disability is different.¹²¹ Students are provided with a quality education that allows them to reach their full potential and achieve greater heights. UNICEF states that there are around 240 million children with disabilities globally. However, these children are disregarded by policymakers, leaving them with little access to educational programs. Due to discrimination and lawmakers not providing programs for disabled students, these children have a greater probability of not attending school and losing the opportunity to contribute positively to their communities or participate in decisions that affect them.¹²² Special-needs children need to receive an education that supports their disability rather than ignoring it.



Special education is provided within regular schools as well as in special education schools. Such schools are specifically designed to educate students who qualify for special education services. While general and special education tends to have the same educational goals, they achieve them differently. General education is provided in conventional classrooms and uses standard instructions to teach students. The students learn the material in class, memorize it, and are then tested on it. However, in special education, the teachers take a different approach to teaching the same concepts as children with learning disabilities often require individualized instruction and need these instructions to be repeated more frequently. Depending on their disability, children learn using methods that work for their disability. For example, a child with a reading disability will learn words not by memorizing, but by using more hands-on techniques, like drawing letters in the sand.¹²³

There are many advantages to separating special education from general education. Special education schools and classrooms can provide their students with needed support. Students with special needs are provided with accommodations and remediations that allow them to reach their highest potential. In addition, these schools employ qualified educators trained to teach special-needs children. These schools can also give students unique resources and services, including speech-language therapy, physical and occupational therapy, learning aids, and academic and psychological counseling. Another advantage is

¹²¹ *Special education*. Center for Parent Information and Resources. (n.d.). Retrieved December 30, 2022, from <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/iep-specialeducation/>

¹²² *Inclusive education*. UNICEF. (n.d.). Retrieved December 30, 2022, from <https://www.unicef.org/education/inclusive-education>

¹²³ Hertog, A. (2021, August 18). *What's the difference between general Ed and special ed?* Making School Work. Retrieved December 31, 2022, from <https://makingschoolwork.com/general-education-and-special-education/>

that specialized schools allow students to fit in, as students can interact with those who face similar challenges.¹²⁴



Despite the benefits mentioned above, there are also disadvantages to separating special education from the standard education system. For example, the educational consultant at Wolf Educational Services, Ann Wolf, states, "The main disadvantage of special needs schools is exposure to only one type of population." Because children only interact with other students with special needs, they are not taught how to interact with students without disabilities. Therefore, they often lack the skill to socialize with students who are different. This causes some special needs children to feel like outcasts once they try to return to a regular school or integrate into society. Therefore, some children are also unable to function well in a setting other than their school.¹²⁵

While students with learning disabilities can study in special schools or classrooms, they can also learn in regular classrooms with students without learning disabilities. These types of classrooms are called inclusive classrooms, where students with and without disabilities can learn together in the same environment. Such classes can support the needs and requirements of all students.¹²⁶ Inclusive learning values the uniqueness of each student and allows all students to feel included and safe. These schools provide trained teachers that can support the needs of every student and allow them to learn and socialize with students that are different from them, resulting in them becoming more inclusive and accepting of others.¹²⁷

Special education teachers guide students with different disabilities and allow them to learn uniquely. Some teachers help students develop new learning skills, while others help physically disabled students. They also work with students who have mental or sensory disabilities. These specialized teachers work with different specialists to form their students' IEPs (Individualized Education Plans), which assemble the goals and milestones of students. These plans outline what special services students will receive to achieve these goals.¹²⁸ For the last 25 years, the US policy insisted that schools include special-needs students in general education classrooms. Recent data from the 2020-21 school year shows that two-thirds of the 7 million special-needs students spent 80% of their time in general education classrooms. Today, separation is less common and is only advised when a child's disability prevents them from being able to

¹²⁴ Ourkids.net. (n.d.). *Special needs schools pros and cons: Our kids*. Special needs schools pros and cons | Our Kids. Retrieved December 31, 2022, from <https://www.ourkids.net/school/special-needs-school-benefits>

¹²⁵ Joseph, C. (2020, July 14). *Advantages and disadvantages of special schools*. eHow UK. Retrieved December 31, 2022, from https://www.ehow.co.uk/list_5970010_advantages-disadvantages-special-schools.html

¹²⁶ *Inclusive Classrooms: A primer for teachers*. Reading Rockets. (2022, October 13). Retrieved December 31, 2022, from <https://www.readingrockets.org/teaching/inclusive-classrooms>

¹²⁷ *The power of letting children learn together*. Open Society Foundations. (n.d.). Retrieved December 31, 2022, from <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/value-inclusive-education#:~:text=Inclusive%20education%20means%20different%20and,participate%20in%20student%20government%20together.>

¹²⁸ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022, October 4). *Special education teachers: Occupational outlook handbook*. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved December 31, 2022, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/special-education-teachers.htm#tab-2>

learn in traditional classrooms. Only one out of every eight students with disabilities learns in a separate classroom or school designed only for special education. An international research analysis on special education and inclusion has found incompatible conclusions on whether children with disabilities benefit from inclusive classrooms. Some special-needs students can succeed in normal classrooms, while others do not. Overall, students with disabilities who learned in general education classrooms did not perform academically, psychologically, or socially. The results of their math and reading tests and psychosocial assessments showed that they performed no higher than special-needs students attending separate special education schools. After analyzing the different studies, the findings have concluded that more research needs to be done to understand when inclusive methods work best for each student and their disability. Likewise, students with disabilities benefit more when schools use a co-teaching model, where a class has a regular teacher and a specially trained teacher for special education.¹²⁹

Students with disabilities might face challenges when attending a non-special school because when they are not provided with the necessary support, it can lead to social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Students facing learning disabilities tend to feel unaccepted and are often bullied, which can increase bad behavior and result in negative actions. Research by the Anti-Bullying Alliance stated that in comparison to the 25% of students without known learning disabilities that experience bullying, 36% of students with special educational needs experience bullying.¹³⁰ Special needs students that are not emotionally or academically supported often feel unsafe and alone and engage in negative behavior. It has also been shown that students with disabilities have an increased risk of mental health issues, like depression and anxiety, as they are frequently not provided with the necessary educational support and can not learn like the other students. If this causes them to fail, their self-esteem lowers, which results in these mental health problems. Research shows that students with specific learning disabilities are 31% more likely to experience high levels of bullying. Students with other health difficulties, like ADHD, are 43% more likely to experience bullying.¹³¹ Furthermore, children with learning disabilities are frequently not given the proper attention or help, which results in many of them being held back and having to repeat a year in school. In addition, these students are more likely than other students to be suspended and miss educational opportunities.¹³² Teachers can help students with learning disabilities and provide them with support and accommodations that will allow them to thrive even in a regular classroom. If educators



¹²⁹ Barshay, J. (2023, January 10). Proof po: NTS: New Research Review questions the evidence for special education inclusion. The Hechinger Report. Retrieved January 16, 2023, from <https://hechingerreport.org/proof-ponts-new-research-review-questions-the-evidence-for-special-educatio-inclusion/>

¹³⁰ Do children with send experience more bullying? Anti. (n.d.). Retrieved January 14, 2023, from <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/at-risk-groups/sen-disability/do-children-send-experience-more>

¹³¹ Social, emotional and behavioral challenges. NCLD. (2019, November 21). Retrieved December 31, 2022, from <https://www.nclld.org/research/state-of-learning-disabilities/social-emotional-and-behavioral-challenges/>

¹³² Understanding learning and attention issues. NCLD. (2019, November 20). Retrieved December 31, 2022, from <https://www.nclld.org/news/state-of-learning-disabilities/understanding-learning-and-attention-issues/>

intervene once they become aware of the disabilities their students have, they can provide them with resources and instructions that will help them improve their learning process.

The Annual Disability Statistics Compendium of 2021 shows the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey results. The results showed that in 2020, 18.5% of adults above the age of 25 with disabilities had less than a high school education, while there were only 9% of people of the same age without disabilities had the same education level. In addition, a higher percentage of adults with disabilities over the age of 25, with high school being their highest level of education compared to adults without disabilities. 33.9% of students with disabilities only had a high school education, while only 24.3% of adults without disabilities only graduated high school.¹³³

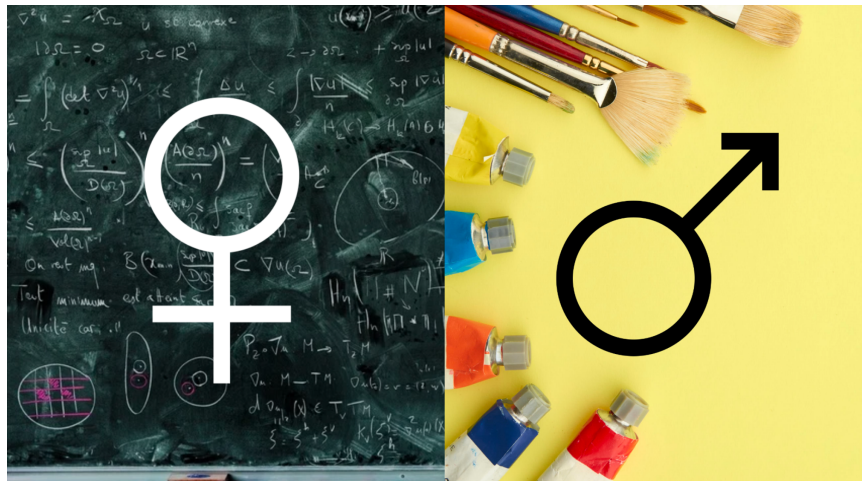
In conclusion, special education services can be provided in many ways. In special education schools, students are allowed more individualized support. They can engage with students that have similar disabilities, but this causes them to rarely engage with students without disabilities. However, when special needs children are taught along with non-special needs children, the students with disabilities might fall behind since they are often not provided with the attention they need. But inclusive classrooms benefit them since different students are able to learn together, even when they experience other difficulties.

¹³³ 2021 *Annual disability statistics compendium*. 2021 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium | Annual Disability Statistics Compendium. (n.d.). Retrieved January 15, 2023, from <https://disabilitycompendium.org/compendium/2021-annual-disability-statistics-compendium-a?page=18>

SINGLE SEX EDUCATION

Andrea Martinez

When thinking of single-sex education, does your mind immediately picture a stuffy Victorian classroom with chalkboards and plaid skirts? Many people think of single-sex schools as a thing of the past when, in actuality, they are becoming more and more popular. Single-sex education consists of learning exclusively with one gender, boys or girls. In most cases, schools that offer single-sex education offer it to the higher grades, most commonly grades 9-12. While some are included in middle school (grades 6-9), fewer reside within grades 1-5. The different types of single-sex schools include residential, boarding, and day schools. Within those categories, schools are primarily religious, for students with special needs, or military.¹³⁴ The motivations behind single-sex education typically include believing that boys and girls have different development rates and performances and are better off in segregated classrooms to learn alongside people with similar learning patterns. This article will cover how single-sex education has its benefits and limitations.



A principal argument for single-sex education often features the idea that girls and boys differ in their way of learning due to the structure of their brains. The cerebral cortex is an important area of the brain responsible for memory, language, attention, and thought. According to Web MD, brain scans show girls' brains have more sites dedicated to verbal functions in the cerebral cortex. In boys, however, the brain is dedicated to spatial and mechanical functioning, making boys more inclined towards movement. Another difference is in the hippocampus, a brain region responsible for learning and verbal memory storage. In girls, this region develops faster than boys, which can give girls an advantage over boys in their vocabulary and writing.

Additionally, boys and girls have biochemical differences, including different levels of hormones in the brain, like serotonin and oxytocin, which are responsible for promoting a calmer mood. Boys have less of

¹³⁴ Kennedy, Robert. "Single-Sex Education: An Overview." *Private School Review*, Private School Review, 16 Aug. 2021, <https://www.privateschoolreview.com/blog/single-sex-education-an-overview>.

these hormones, which could explain why they could be more restless than girls.¹³⁵ These biological differences do not dictate *what* someone can learn, just *how* they learn it. These differences in learning styles serve as the main argument for single-sex education advocates.

The different learning styles provide an opportunity for single-sex education schools to tailor their classes to the needs of their students. When it comes to boys, visual or tactile ways of learning through which they can explore, touch and build are optimal. Movement is also vital for boys, which is why many of them count down the minutes to PE and lunch break.¹³⁶ On the other hand, girls can sit and listen for more prolonged periods according to their brain chemistry. However, PE and lunch can cause them distress because they include social aspects, for example working in teams or sitting and talking with peers. Distress is a consequence of social factors because relationships and emotions have power over a growing girl, so much so that if a girl feels socially isolated, her schoolwork could suffer as well.¹³⁷



The environment a single-sex school creates is another argument in favor of them. Typically, students find themselves desiring to impress the opposite sex. This can cause a fear of failing in front of them, thus making them take fewer risks. Removing these pressures results in a more dynamic, accessible, and comfortable learning environment. Removing girls in school settings made boys “knuckle down and work on their own.” Removing boys in school settings made girls more vocal in group discussions.¹³⁸ These factors constitute a significant benefit for single-sex education because environments in which students can freely express themselves is crucial for their learning.

Schools with only one sex have the opportunity to provide methods for the sex that works best for them. The material that is taught could be tailored. For example, all-male schools could teach books that speak more to the male experience, and all-girl schools could teach books with strong female leads to appeal to female readers.¹³⁹

However, this idea also raises the question: is it beneficial to teach a growing child so one-dimensionally? Wouldn't it be better to allow them to step into somebody else's shoes and learn about the experience they don't already have? The opportunity to learn about more than just one's own experiences could lead to a more open-minded individual. Some people are different. They can move and fidget; likewise, boys would excel in a calm setting. Mixed-gender education supporters argue no.

¹³⁵ “Why Boys and Girls Learn Differently.” WebMD, WebMD, <https://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/how-boys-and-girls-learn-differently?%3Fscrlybrkr=1a9c9d45>.

¹³⁶ Thomas, David. “How Boys Learn Differently than Girls.” *Parent Cue*, 23 Oct. 2018, <https://theparentcue.org/how-boys-learn-differently-than-girls/>.

¹³⁷ Goff, Sissy Goff Contributor Sissy. “How Girls Learn Differently than Boys.” *Parent Cue*, 14 Sept. 2020, <https://theparentcue.org/how-girls-learn-differently-than-boys/>.

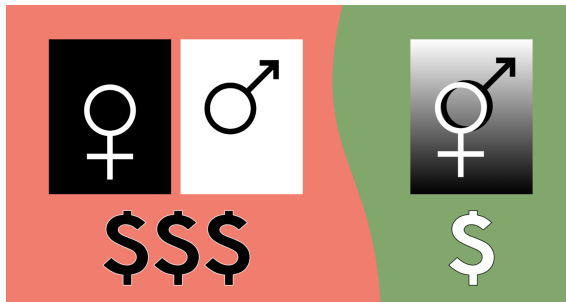
¹³⁸ *American Foreign Service Association*, <https://afsa.org/all-girls-all-boys-all-good-benefits-single-sex-education>.

¹³⁹ Grossberg, Blythe. “3 Reasons Why Single-Sex Schools May Be Right for You.” *ThoughtCo*, ThoughtCo, 14 Oct. 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/advantages-of-single-sex-schools-2774613>.

Schools with both genders allow for there to be more gender diversity. When put together, girls and boys get the opportunity to coexist and work together, which helps grow vital social skills. Students can even learn from each other's differences. The consequences of single-sex schools will often occur in the future because it is argued that they produce individuals who don't know how to communicate or work with the opposite sex due to the lack of experience working with them as they grow up.¹⁴⁰ The solution, however, that single-sex schools have to offer is to integrate this gender diversity in extracurriculars or staff interactions.

The most significant disagreement between supporters of single-sex education and those who oppose it is whether or not single-sex schools promote equality. A recent study called “The National Coalition of Girls’ Study” reports that more girls in single-sex environments consider themselves to be strong in mathematics and computer technology than their co-education counterparts. Three times as many girls from only-girl schools want to become engineers. Likewise, another study in Psychology of Men and Masculinity showed that boys from all-boy schools were twice as likely to choose a career in the arts than boys in co-education schools.¹⁴¹ Overall, students seem more likely to explore fields atypical to their sex when attending a single-sex school.

Nevertheless, the supporters of co-education have a different perspective. When segregation occurs, the result can be that they wrongly conclude that one is better than the other. Supporters of co-education state that the current segregation of the genders has parallels with racial segregation. During this time, it was believed that there were different ways in which races learned in classroom settings. Since racial segregation promoted racism, co-education supporters believe that gender segregation promotes sexism.¹⁴² Their solution is to allow the genders to coexist in a school setting to put girls and boys on the same level.



In conclusion, there are solid arguments for and against single-sex education, including different classroom designs, gender stereotyping, environment, and diversity. However, the outcomes of both options are sometimes mixed and may not be the most reliable because some factors that influence success are ignored. Especially in the United States, single-sex schools tend to be more expensive, meaning that the families that choose to send their children there already have

economic advantages, which can influence success. For that reason, it is hard to recognize whether or not the success of single-sex education stems from the instruction itself or preexisting advantages. Overall, one can conclude that single-sex education could both offer benefits and also harm society.

¹⁴⁰ Sosnowski, Jana. “Statistics on How Poverty Affects Children in Schools.” *Education*, 29 Sept. 2016, <https://education.seattlepi.com/statistics-poverty-affects-children-schools-3636.html>.

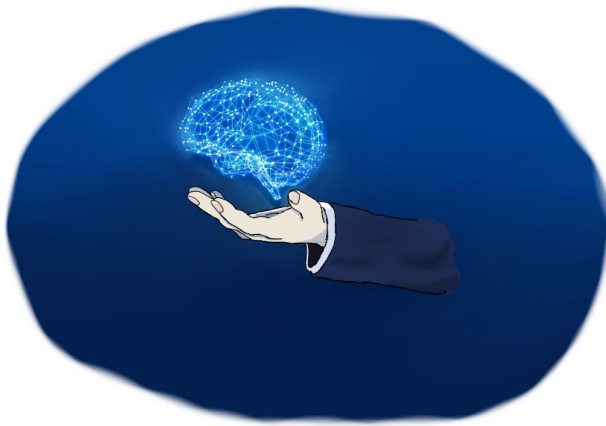
¹⁴¹ *American Foreign Service Association*, <https://afsa.org/all-girls-all-boys-all-good-benefits-single-sex-education>.

¹⁴² Sosnowski, Jana. “Statistics on How Poverty Affects Children in Schools.” *Education*, 29 Sept. 2016, <https://education.seattlepi.com/statistics-poverty-affects-children-schools-3636.html>.

A well-known MOOC is the platform “Coursera.” Today, Coursera is one of the largest MOOCs in the world. However, future Ed-tech innovations are still developing.

There are many Ed-tech innovations currently being developed for the future. One of those technologies is the Metaverse, which is set to tremendously benefit the gaming, E-commerce, and social media industries. For example, instead of watching a history video on a 2D screen, it is proposed that the Metaverse will be able to simulate history and historical events through virtual reality. To further the online learning experience, the Metaverse will be able to simulate the classroom, with teachers and students having their own virtual avatars. The Metaverse can also aid college students’ learning development. For example, it is predicted that medical students will be able to practice surgery on a virtual dummy and that engineering majors practice wiring in the metaverse.¹⁴⁶

Another new trend in educational technology is Bite-Sized Learning. Bite-Sized Learning, or BSL, is the breaking down of a learning course into very short online lessons.¹⁴⁷ This innovation has been popularized in elearning websites, such as Elucidat, and social media platforms, in particular TikTok. In 2022, the hashtag #LearnOnTikTok received over 250 Billion views, indicating a sharp rise in public interest. People mainly seek to learn from BSL clips because they are engaging, short, and helpful while performing tasks. According to a statistic gathered by Elucidat, a popular e-learning platform, around 56% of BSL users use BSL right when they are completing a relevant task. All of this raises an important question about the future of Ed-tech: Will this benefit education or not?



There are various benefits to educational technology. For example, one primary advantage of this technology is that it allows students to be more engaged and active participants in the learning process. In recent developments, children have become much more experienced with technology at a younger age. Therefore, in school, there is a growing trend of redesigning the learning process in order to give students a more “hand on experience” with technology while in the classroom. One tool implemented to meet such a goal is “Pear Deck.” Pear Deck is a software that allows teachers to create

interactive presentations, presentations where students can directly interact with the slides of the presentation on their personal devices. With this, teachers can put questions on the presentation, allowing students to answer safely and anonymously to answer questions with interactive graphics. Teachers also have an advantage too due to Pear Deck allowing teachers to see how their students answer questions, allowing them to understand better how each individual student processes and develops their answer to

¹⁴⁶ Voloshyn, Dmytro. "The Trends of the Future: What Are the Next Big Things in Education Technology?" *Preply*, 24 Feb. 2022, preply.com/en/blog/future-of-edtech/. Accessed 7 Dec. 2022.

¹⁴⁷ Greany, Kristie. "Bite-Sized Learning Guide: Tips, Benefits and Importance." *Elucidat*, edited by Elucidat, 20 Dec. 2021, www.elucidat.com/blog/bite-sized-elearning/#:~:text=What%20is%20bite%2D,fit%20into%20their%20busy%20schedules. Accessed 7 Dec. 2022.

the question.¹⁴⁸ Overall, kids show both high levels of engagement and motivation with ed-tech. One example of satisfaction can be shown in a survey published in 2013, assessing how several preschoolers in Malaysia were asked to describe their experiences with an interactive AR (Augmented Reality) book. The results showed relative satisfaction with the experience. In it, six preschoolers claimed they wanted to see the book again, while five overall enjoyed the experience, eight strongly enjoyed the book, and finally, 9 preschoolers strongly wanted to see the book again.¹⁴⁹ Therefore, overall, there seems to be a rise in satisfaction levels among children with this technology curriculum.

Another benefit of using educational technology is that it is an enjoyable method that can prepare students for the future. Today, many jobs require a use of technology to be successful. In an estimate made by an Indian Trade Journal in 2022, it was suggested that 80% that will be created in the next decade will require some knowledge of STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), and technology. One technology which can help students prepare for their future is VR (Virtual Reality).



For example, students can use Virtual Reality headsets to enter a simulation of the job of their choice, which can introduce them to a professional work environment. Additionally, VR lessons can be planned to be interactive. With this in mind, students can put on their headsets knowing that complex concepts will be introduced and explained in an engaging way, creating an incentive to learn.¹⁵⁰ Educational technology can also teach children about entrepreneurial and financial knowledge.¹⁵¹ Combined with students' existing knowledge of technology usage, educational technology will allow students to practice entrepreneurial skills through, for example, creating “mock businesses”, business websites, and learning how to use social media to sell products. This is important because it will allow students to develop skills that will help them obtain and maintain high paying jobs that require the use of technology, especially when companies use more technology and hire less employees.¹⁵² One example of financial education in schools with ed-tech is to do with a new startup called “Money Vehicle.” Created by former NFL player Jedidiah Collins, Money Vehicle is an online advisory company which gives online resources for, and communicates with teachers on how they teach high school students financial literacy.¹⁵³

On the other hand, Ed-tech can cause various problems. For example, since Educational technology requires the extensive use of computers and the internet, it runs the risk of exposing school-aged students to various dangers while on the web. For example, one major risk on the web is cyberbullying. Cyberbullying includes the spreading of hateful, humiliating, and threatening messages on online

¹⁴⁸ "How to Use Simple Tech Apps to Support ALL Learners." *Youtube*, uploaded by TED-Ed Educator Talks and Stacy Roshan, Google, 19 July 2022, www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkyd-xZBGOo. Accessed 4 Jan. 2023.

¹⁴⁹ Rambli, Dayang Rohaya Awang, et al. "Fun Learning with AR Alphabet Book for Preschool Children." *Procedia Computer Science*, vol. 25, 26 Nov. 2013, pp. 212-19, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2013.11.026>. Accessed 4 Jan. 2023.

¹⁵⁰ Singh, Ayushi. "How VR Can Prepare Students for Next-gen STEM Jobs." *Voice & Data*, 2022. *ProQuest Central Student*, www.proquest.com/trade-journals/how-vr-can-prepare-students-next-gen-stem-jobs/docview/2755765332/se-2?accountid=35001.

¹⁵¹ Software Testing Help, editor. "Future of Virtual Reality ? Market Trends and Challenges." *Software Testing Help*, 5 Dec. 2022, www.softwaretestinghelp.com/future-of-virtual-reality/. Accessed 7 Jan. 2023.

¹⁵² Go Guardian Team. "How Does Technology Prepare Students for the Future?" *GoGuardian*, 9 June 2020, www.goguardian.com/blog/how-does-technology-prepare-students-for-the-future. Accessed 7 Jan. 2023.

¹⁵³ "Money Vehicle Program Introduction." *Youtube*, uploaded by Jedidiah Collins, Google, 3 Oct. 2022, www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iVod-E2ME8. Accessed 7 Jan. 2023.

platforms as a means to terrorize and harass victims.¹⁵⁴ Bullying of this kind comes in various forms. For example, “trolling,” one form of cyberbullying, is the action of posting controversial statements on social platforms with a goal of generating anger in a victim. Another form, catfishing, involves the bully taking on a different persona online, sometimes as the victim themselves. Cyberbullying is a major issue all over the world. In 2018 alone, 37% of Indian parents, 29% of Brazilian parents, 26% of American parents, 25% of Belgian parents, and 26% of South African parents reported that one of their children was a victim of cyberbullying.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, there is a risk that students may be using some of their educational devices to bully their peers. Another danger students could encounter online are sex predators. Normally, these kinds of predators would log on to video games popular with children, however, the predator, themselves, would often take the persona of a child to befriend minors. In 2018, over 20% of sex trafficking victims were children, showing how vulnerable and gullible children can be when left unsupervised when roaming the internet.¹⁵⁶ These dangers could cause educators to dial back the amount of computers and internet access in the classroom in order to lower the risk of being responsible for exposing children to dangerous content, thereby challenging the presence of edtech like computers in the classroom.

In conclusion, education technology continues to develop each day and can have tremendous impacts on the quality of education in the future. While there are cons to the increased implementation of technology in the classroom, its limits are endless and it has great potential for revolutionizing school curricula.

¹⁵⁴ Kam, Katherine. "4 Dangers of the Internet." *Grow*, edited by John M. Goldenring, WebMD, 1 June 2007, www.webmd.com/parenting/features/4-dangers-internet. Accessed 26 Dec. 2022.

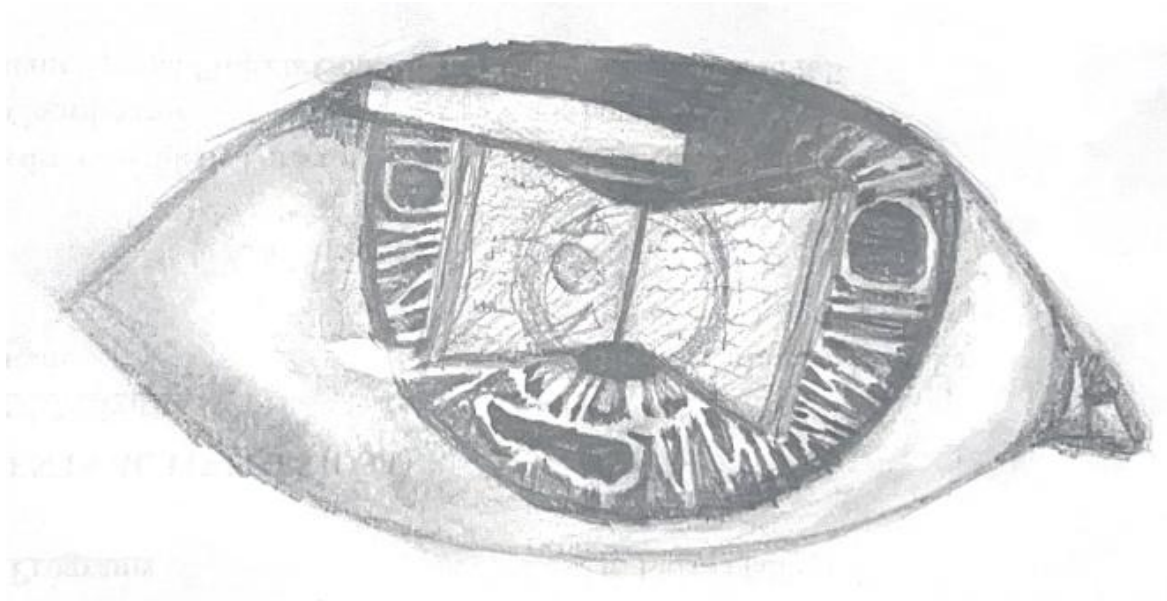
¹⁵⁵ Cook, Sam. "Cyberbullying Facts and Statistics for 2018 ? 2022." *Comparitech*, edited by Richard Richard Patterson, 14 Nov. 2022, www.comparitech.com/internet-providers/cyberbullying-statistics/. Accessed 26 Dec. 2022.

¹⁵⁶ University of Nevada. *The Global, National, and State Fight against Sex Trafficking*. 2018. *University of Nevada*, Nevada U, 2018, <https://onlinedegrees.unr.edu/blog/the-national-global-and-state-fight-against-sex-trafficking/>. Accessed 26 Dec. 2022.

AFTERWORD

Access to an education is not a privilege, it is a human right. However, with the number of children with a lack of access to a proper education reaching 72 million worldwide, it is crucial that one informs themselves and expands their outlooks upon an issue so pertinent to the society we live in today. The UNIS-UN Executive Committee has invited experts to address the ever-relevant issues regarding the future of education worldwide in order to catalyze a dialogue pertaining to the importance of education and the barriers that prevent individuals from accessing it. Furthermore, this conference brings to light several other present education-related issues such as student mental health, the role of opinions in the classroom, the rights of educators, and more.

It is our hope that this working paper was beneficial in developing your understanding of the importance of education in the contemporary world we live in today, and that after processing this knowledge, you are now able to form your own opinions and unveil solutions to this prevalent issue.



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