

Forum: SDG 5

Student Officers: Viktória Gyuricza, SeoHyeon Kim, Yoon HyoJung

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TOPIC 2: Question of female empowerment in education

I. Introduction to the Topic

The second topic that the SDG committee will be discussing is on the question of female empowerment in education. It is commonly understood that education is capable of promoting sustainable development for both the individual and whole communities. Its effects often include improved economic outcome, well-being, and social growth. Education can play a significant role in empowering female's rights, further improving equality between genders. Empowering effects of female education on economic, political, psychological, and socio-cultural standards are expected to be worthy enough in multiple perspectives, including individual, community, national, and international scale.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) has reported the common perceptions of what constitutes empowerment in different scales as below.

Empowerment at the individual **level** constitutes: sharing women's domestic duties and responsibilities with men, women deciding where the income they earn will be spent, ability to prevent violence, having a sense of pride, satisfaction, and control over their life.

Empowerment at **community level** constitutes: presence of women's organizations, ability to 'collect' to discuss and inform opinions, increased number of women leaders at community level, involvement of women in design & development & application of technology, participation in community programmes, and involvement of women in non-traditional tasks.

Empowerment at **national & international level** constitutes: awareness of political rights and social position, integration of women in the general national development plan, existence of women's networks and publications, ability to be officially visible and recognized, and media taking heed of women's issues.

Through the empowerment of female education, it is highly possible to make a positive correlation between female education and development in female empowerment in general at different scales as shown above. Careful observation and evaluation of the way of empowering female

education and the relationship between education and general female empowerment in different scales will be critical to come up with sustainable solutions.

II. Definition of Key Terms & Concepts

Definition of Key Terms

Key term: Female empowerment

Although female empowerment can be defined in many ways depending on different perspectives, definition often includes the process by which women gain power and control over their own lives and acquire the ability to make strategic choices.

Key term: Education

Education refers to the process of bringing desirable changes into the behavior of human beings. Being aware that education does not only include formal types such as academics but also informal and non-formal types.

Key term: Sustainability

Sustainability consists of fulfilling the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future generations, while ensuring a balance between economic growth, environmental care and social well-being. Bringing sustainable solutions forward for empowering female education, further promoting female rights and gender equality will be vital for not only females but for society as a whole.

Key term: Equality

Equality is defined as a state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities. As empowerment of female education can possibly promote gender equality, acknowledging the definition of equality will be crucial.

Key term: Equity

Equity refers to the quality of being fair and impartial. Taking consideration of both equality and equity when approaching the question of female empowerment will be necessary to find sustainable solutions.

III. Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholder 1: UN Women

UN Women is the UN agency dedicated to gender equality as well as female empowerment. It supports all UN member states to achieve gender equality through setting global standards, laws, policies and programmes with different governments, organizations, and civil society. It works globally to make a vision of the sustainable development goals.

Key stakeholder 2: Association for women's rights in development

The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) is a global, feminist, membership, movement-support organization. Association aims to support feminist, women's rights and gender justice movements. It closely works with worldwide activists and policy makers to positively affect gender policies and practices.

Key stakeholder 3: UNESCO

UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) contributes to peace and security through promoting international cooperation in education, science, culture, communication, and information. Its programmes contribute to achieving the sustainable development goal adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

Key stakeholder 4: Male

Considering the concept of "gender equality", taking male into account to find sustainable solutions for female empowerment is necessary. Not only that, to achieve both equality and equity through solutions, collaborative works will be required.

IV. Key Issues including Background Information

Gender-based violence:

Gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their genders. It originated from gender inequality, the abuse of power and detrimental norms. One in three women are estimated to experience sexual or physical violence. Violence often results in having life-long repercussions for survivors, or even death. Connection to the empowerment of education, this type of violence is one of the barriers that hinder the achievement of female empowerment. Resolving the issue of gender-based violence should take place with the issue of female empowerment.

Child marriage:

Child marriage refers to either informal or formal marriage between a child under the age of 18 and an adult or another child. Girls who marry before 18 are more likely to experience domestic violence. They have worse economic and health outcomes, further limiting the country's capacity to provide quality health and education services. Being in charge of taking care of families other than the females themselves serves as a stepping stone for achieving female empowerment in education and beyond.

Poverty:

Poverty is one other barrier that limits empowerment in education for females. Poverty does not solely mean lack of income but it includes hunger and malnutrition, most importantly, limited access to education and following social discrimination and limited social inclusion. Taking consideration of both the poverty and female empowerment in education will be vital to find sustainable solutions.

V. Timeline of Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

Timeline of Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

Date	Description of event
1691	Celebrated writer and nun Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz of Mexico defended female rights to education by proclaiming ‘one and perfectly well philosophize while cooking supper’”
1860	Women’s rights activist and Russian philanthropist Anna Filosofova co-founded a society to educate and train the poor rather than provide them with cash. She also supported them through providing decent work.
1988	First institutions in German history which offer secondary level education with subjects such as foreign languages and mathematics to a considerable number of women.
2016-2021	Under the Global Partnership for Girls’ and Women’s education “Better life, better future”, the Joint Programme on Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education was done. It was in a partnership with UNESCO, UN Women, and UNFPA.

VI. Possible Challenges & Solutions

Gender-based violence:

In order to deal with the gender-based violence that hinders the achievement of female empowerment in education, it is significant to know how women are targeted to be victims of violence in national, regional levels. Understanding how each country has been acknowledging and responding to those issues will be vital as well to approach this issue. As mentioned above, engaging with different key stakeholders including male as allies will be beneficial. Treating this violence as a public health issue can provide more significance to this issue, thus getting more attention and support from different organizations and individuals which will be helpful as well.

Child marriage:

Finding sustainable solution to child marriage will start from researching how and why child marriage has been happening both globally and nationally. Also, focusing on women who are most at-risk will also be helpful as it can both help people under urgency and provide a glimpse

of which direction the solution should head. Revising cultural norms can also be suggested to prevent deterioration of the issue. Not only preventing children from getting married but also supporting females, especially children who are already married will be crucial to prevent further marriage issues. As UNICEF has been taking active actions for resolving the issue of child marriage, collaborative work with them would be recommended.

Poverty:

The key concept of “Equity” should be used here to resolve the issue of poverty, further female empowerment in education. Prioritization of population under extreme poverty should be done through careful evaluation in both global and local levels. Governments at the national level should consider providing employment opportunities and financial assistance. Acknowledging the significance of individual scale work on contributing diminishment of poverty, such as campaigns and media works will be crucial as well.

VII. Recommendations for Resolution Writing including Research

Delegates are recommended to begin their research from their countries’ responses and actions to three key issues of gender-based violence, child marriage, and poverty. For example, in 2021, Bangladesh has done cooperative programmes with UNICEF, equipping 480 child journalists with the skills to generate video content to report on child marriage and general female empowerment issues.

When forming resolutions, it is more than important to take the concept of equality & equity and significance of detailed cooperative work with key stakeholders into consideration. Furthermore, making sure to find countries that share the same stance on how issues should be addressed or that can empower the effects of solutions to form the best possible resolutions.

VIII. Bibliography

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