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## Gender equality in education and achieving sustainable development

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## **Gender equality in education and achieving sustainable development**

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**Abstract :**

The study aimed to highlight gender equality in education and achieve sustainable development, the relationship between education and gender equality, the role of education in achieving the fifth goal of sustainable development goals (gender equality), and to provide recommendations and proposals that promote gender equality in education in order to achieve Sustainable development, and the study concluded that gender equality is a major goal of sustainable development goals, and education for sustainable development is the main gateway to achieving the principle of gender equality, and it is necessary to find opportunities, mechanisms and strategies that will achieve gender equality in the field of education, In addition to the need to overcome the difficulties and obstacles that increase discrimination on the basis of gender in education, and the goals of sustainable development can only be achieved through achieving gender equality. At the forefront of any development program because it is the gateway to achieving all sustainable development goals, including touch Awa in gender.

**Keywords:** gender - equality in education - sustainable development.

**Introduction:**

Long-term human development aims to build and upgrade people's standard of living, intellectual and cultural, expand their choices in all fields and involve them in political, economic and social decision-making.

Education is one of the building blocks and fundamental rights of every human being on Earth. Education has become an essential means of economic development and sustainable development in most of the world's diverse areas.

The issue of gender equality has also gained an important place in the international community, particularly with regard to education and

employment, and advocates for education that establishes equality between males and females (Al-Saida, 2011, 25). Where the integration of females in development is linked to the educational level, the low educational level of females results in weak female participation in employment and development (Osman, 2011, 120).

Although there is an increasing interest in women's education globally and their participation in different fields of work, they tend to study certain fields of knowledge and work in specific occupations, while males tend to study different fields of knowledge and also join different jobs and jobs (Al-Saida, 2011, 26).

Sustainable development is one of the most important issues that has aroused attention in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It reflects development that addresses the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is also built on three basic interrelated pillars: economically effective, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable development (Bouزيد and Fazil, 2017, 41).

There are significant gender gaps in access to and completion of learning and the continuation of education in many settings, often to the detriment of girls, although boys are less fortunate in a number of regions. Despite progress, more girls still do not attend school than boys do - 16 million girls will never enter classrooms and two thirds of the 750 million adults without basic literacy skills are women. (UNESCO: /themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt)

Education is linked to development; It is the source of society's needs and requirements for trained and qualified workforce in various fields of work (Osman, 2011, 181).

The goal of gender equality and women's empowerment is one of the most important targets recommended by the United Nations, and among the indicators that enable us to achieve this goal is the ratio of females to males in general education (Bouزيد and Fazil, 2017, 44).

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda strongly provides for and recognizes gender equality as a guiding principle linked to the realization

of the right to education, and recognizes that women and girls should be equally empowered in and through education ([campaignforeducation.org](http://campaignforeducation.org))

The importance of gender equality in education for sustainable development is reflected above. The present paper therefore seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between education and gender equality?
2. What is the role of education in promoting gender equality?
3. How can education achieve SDG 5 (gender equality)?
4. What proposals contribute to the promotion of gender equality in education in order to achieve sustainable development?

Those questions were answered through a review of international reports, United Nations literature and sustainable development goals, UNESCO reports and some studies on sustainable and gender development in education and those related to education, gender equality and sustainable development, and a number of themes discussing gender equality in education and sustainable development.

### **Gender concept:**

The Brave (Shafaq al-d and Ouadi, 2006, 27) defines gender as what can be defined by its significance and substantive content with all social characteristics acquired from the characteristics of agreement and difference between male and female people of diversity, multiple roles and social, economic and political functions, not from the biological standpoint, but from the principle of the division of social work.

It is also defined (Taya, 2004, 42-43) as different roles (rights, duties, obligations), relationships, responsibilities and the status of women and men, which are socially and culturally defined through the historical development of a society, but are subject to change.

The term "gender" is usually associated with roles, responsibilities and relationships between men and women. and through a range of behaviours and prevailing cultural legacies that predetermine gender-specific roles s inequality in social, political and economic rights regardless of biological differences that do not limit any of them, Both

sexes have idiosyncracies to which no two will disagree (Hammadin, 2020, 32).

It is evident from the foregoing that gender is a socially acquired phenomenon, influenced by society's culture, evolving and changing according to the changing culture of society, and therefore social and cultural factors are responsible for identifying differences, differences, roles and functions by gender; They therefore vary from society to society and culture to culture.

### **Concept of sustainable development:**

Sustainable development is an expression of development that is stable, has communication factors, not one of the development patterns that development thinkers have consistently highlighted, such as: Economic, social, economic, cultural, environmental, institutional or political development, as defined by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: that the right to development must be achieved, so that it is achieved on an equal basis with the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations (Douglas, 2000, 17), defined by Abu al-Nasr and Mohammed, 2017) as continuing, equitable, balanced and integrated development that takes into account the environmental dimension in all its projects and that does not reap the benefits of present generations at the expense of future generations.

There are a number of requirements for achieving sustainable development goals, including the formulation of intellectual bases with new standards and methods development of flexible formal and informal education systems, building curricula on development developments and people's needs education, making education a continuous and integrated process, and creating national education and scientific research policies from the perspective of sustainable development and the creation of modern concepts and methods of quality and excellence with quantitative and non-quantitative standards, Transforming the silent revolution of education into an energy of action, creativity and cultural humanity, and enabling the learner to adapt to variables (El Hadj, 2009, 13-14).

Hence, education and sustainable development are a coin face. They share each other's evolution. They meet in outputs that develop society and advance. As much as they are devoted to sustainable development in the field of education and its development, this is reflected in educational outputs from educated and trained personnel that help to revitalize the sustainable development movement; Education is therefore an entry point for sustainable development issues.

### **Relationship between education and gender equality:**

Education has a strong but standard relationship with gender equality. Women's education is strongly linked to economic, health and social benefits. Education is linked to increased participation of women in the labour force. Improving female education outcomes improves health outcomes, such as reducing child mortality (World Education Monitoring Report 2020, 312).

Women's education is the means of overcoming the division of roles gender ", based on the notion of gender between men and women, thereby establishing equality between them s right to perform the work to which they are entitled by the education they have received, In addition, women's education contributes to improving their health, and improved education and health increases productivity that leads to economic growth (Badawi, 2008, 70).

The prevalence of illiteracy, weak university education and lack of technical training reduce the level of women's active participation in all areas, which clearly points to the importance of providing educational opportunities for women to participate in public life. The disparity in educational opportunities between men and women negatively affects their ability to access employment opportunities (Osman, 2011, 138).

Gender equality is UNESCO's overall priority and is closely linked to its efforts to promote the right to education and support the achievement of sustainable development goals. Through the Education to 2030 Framework, Goal 4 of sustainable development aims to "ensure quality, equitable and inclusive education and promote lifelong learning for all",

and Goal 5 of sustainable development demonstrates the need to "achieve gender equality and empower women and girls". (UNESCO: [themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt](https://unesco.org/themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt)).

Views (Commission on the Status of Women, 2016, 4) considers that the realization of the right to education contributes to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, human rights, sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Gender equality is intrinsically linked to the right to quality education for all. To that end, we need and empower girls, boys, women and men. ([campaignforeducation.org](https://campaignforeducation.org))

One indicator we can know whether or not the goal of "social equality" has been achieved in the social dimension of sustainable development is the ratio of female to male literacy (Bouzid and Fazil, 2017, 46), and it is equally important to recognize that the gender dimensions of access to quality education faced by girls, boys, women and men are different as well as their needs. ([campaignforeducation.org](https://campaignforeducation.org))

As a result, the relationship between education and gender equality can be regarded as an expulsive and historical one. If education for both types is achieved, the goal of gender equality will be achieved.

### **Grounds for gender discrimination in education:**

With regard to gender-based discrimination in education, poverty and discrimination are both causes and consequences of society's prevailing gender inequalities. (UNESCO: [unesco.org/themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt](https://unesco.org/themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt)).

Children's level of enrolment and retention in education is inversely linked to the degree of human poverty of their families. The lower the family income, the lower the educational level of their children, and the greater the likelihood that they will be paid to work to help the family physically and to avoid pressure on the family budget by spending on education, and in cases where the family is obliged to insert some children but not others or the diversion of some from education, they



make their decisions on the basis of gender discrimination between children, Male children are often given priority access to education, but if some of the family's children are to be diverted from education, It is female children who are diverted from education (Osman, 2011, 85).

UNESCO notes that among the many obstacles to women's full exercise, completion and benefit from education are poverty, geographical isolation, minority status, disability, early marriage and pregnancy, and gender-based violence, as well as traditional trends on the status and role of women. (UNESCO: <https://ar.unesco.org/themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt>).

The reasons for the gender gap in education are the following (Osman, 2011, 98):

1. Few girls' school buildings, especially in rural areas.
2. After schools from housing, especially in the countryside
3. The living conditions of the family, which severely weaken girls' enrolment or dropout at a certain stage of schooling.

These reasons underscore the importance of addressing and overcoming them if we are to achieve gender equality in education.

In addition, wars, armed conflicts, diseases, epidemics, natural and environmental hazards and emergencies in general can exacerbate gender discrimination in education.

### **The role of education in promoting gender equality:**

The Education Agenda to 2030 recognizes that gender equality requires the adoption of an approach "to ensure that girls and boys, women and men, benefit and complete education, as well as to strengthen their capacities equally in and through education". UNESCO: <https://ar.unesco.org/themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt>

Education can contribute to the promotion of gender equality through the following means (Badawi, 2008, 72):

- Provide genuine opportunities for females to attend basic education, thereby increasing females' access to secondary schools, thereby reducing poverty among women and their prospects for gainful employment.
- Achieving gender parity in acceptance policies; In other words, for

their age groups, boys' and girls' proportions are equal to enrolment in an educational system, all of which participate in its different courses and receive the same educational benefits and opportunities.

- The formation and development of the female's mind in the process of education and learning realizes her personality and grants her personal authority.
- Incorporate in school curriculum planning, organization and implementation the values of gender equality, which will achieve equal growth for both males and females.
- Supporting girls' citizenship through comprehensive civic school education that affirms the concepts and values of citizenship and human rights, from curricula and teaching methods, through relations between teachers and students, to the school climate in general.
- Provide girls with the opportunity to achieve a kind of autonomy in their lives and exercise all spheres of humanitarian action by fully participating in the education and learning process without fear of reprimand, violence, disregard or marginalization.

UNESCO 2003 defines full gender equality in education in the following ways:

- Equality of opportunity: in the sense that both sexes have the same opportunities within schools without prejudice.
- Equality in the educational process: in the sense that both sexes receive the same treatment, study the same curricula, enjoy the same teaching methods and means of education free of gender stereotypes and conflicts, provide them with the same academic guidance, and benefit from the same quantity and quality of basic educational structures.
- Equality in internal results: In the sense that educational achievements, duration of study and academic qualifications do not vary by sex.
- Equality in external outcomes: in the sense of equality between males and females in employment, if any, and the time required to obtain a job after completion of education, similar qualifications and income. (Badawi, 2008, 71).

In addition, the cultural background of society should be taken into account, and positive aspects should be used to stimulate and advance girls' education and the enactment of educational legislation to achieve and ensure equality in education for both males and females.

### **Education for sustainable development goals:**

Education for sustainable development aims to develop competencies that enable individuals to reflect on their actions and capture their current and future social, cultural, economic and environmental realities at the local and global levels. It is also necessary to enable individuals to act in complex situations in a sustainable manner, which may require them to pursue new paths, and to participate in social and political processes, to contribute to their communities' orientation towards sustainable development. (UNESCO, 2017, 5).

### **Sustainable Development Goal 4 provides for: quality education.**

It has six main objectives:

- 4-1: Free and quality primary and secondary education for all.
- 4-2: Good quality of children's development, care and education for all.
- 4-3: Access to technical, vocational and higher education for all.
- 4-4: Elimination of gender disparity in education.
- 4-5: Teaching writing, reading and numeracy for all.
- 4-6: Knowledge and skills for all learners to support sustainable development.

Through Goal 4, education must contribute to a new vision for sustainable global development. Framework 2. The 4-7 objective of the sustainable development goals defines the education framework for sustainable development, providing for "Ensure that by 2030 all learners acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to support sustainable development, including education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, appreciation of cultural diversity and appreciation of the contribution of culture to sustainable development." (UNESCO, 2017, 6)

The key role of education for sustainable development in achieving sustainable development is increasingly recognized at the international level. This role was recognized at the three major world summits on sustainable development: the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, hosted by Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Other major global agreements commend education for sustainable development (UNESCO, 2017, 5).

One of the goals of Education for Sustainable Development is (Abu al-Nasr and Mohammed, 2017: 95-113):

1. They are poverty and hunger in all their forms and ensure dignity and equality.
2. Ensure quality, equitable and inclusive education for all and promote lifelong learning opportunities.
3. Protect our planet's natural resources and the climate for present and future generations.
4. Enabling people to have a prosperous life that meets their aspirations and is in harmony with nature.
5. Promoting peaceful societies free from fear and violence.
6. Revitalizing partnership and strengthening the spirit of global solidarity.

The learning processes to be implemented in order to achieve sustainable development goals through education for sustainable development are defined (UNESCO, 2017) as follows:

- 1- Integrate education for sustainable development into various policies, strategies and programmes.
- 2- Integrate education for sustainable development into curricula and textbooks.
- 3- Integrate education for sustainable development into teachers' training programmes.
- 4- Education for sustainable development in classrooms and other learning environments is the institution's overall approach.
- 5- How do we evaluate learning outcomes and the quality of

education programmes in education for sustainable development?

It is evident from the foregoing that there is no sustainable development without quality education and that Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is achieved through achieving the structure of the other Goals and the SDGs will not be achieved until Goal 4.

### **Education for Sustainable Development Goal 5 (gender equality):**

Education for sustainable development will develop the key reviewing competencies necessary to achieve sustainability and relevance for all sustainable development goals and is capable of delivering specific learning outcomes that are essential to achieving each of these goals. One such goal is the fifth sustainable development goal (gender equality): to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Sustainable Development Goal 4 encompasses a gender dimension and is closely linked to the goals and ambitions of Goal 5: gender equality. The close relationship between education and gender is based on evidence showing the strong link between girls' education and social and economic development, including poverty reduction: one additional school year can increase women's income by 10% to 20%; Each year of secondary education also reduces the likelihood of child marriage by five percentage points or more; The child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to avoid dying before the age of five. The United Nations has declared that "gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary basis for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world" (Jameel, 2021).

### **Learning goals related to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (gender equality):**

A number of learning goals relating to Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (gender equality) in the cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural fields are set out (UNESCO, 2017, 18) as follows:

#### **Cognitive Learning Goals:**

- 1- The scholar's understanding of the concept of gender issues,

gender equality and gender discrimination, and his definition of all forms of discrimination on the basis of sex and all forms of violence and inequality.

- 2- The scholar understands women's and girls' fundamental rights, including their right to freedom from exploitation and violence, and their reproductive rights.
- 3- The lesson's understanding of the levels of gender inequality in his country and culture and its comparison with global levels (taking into account the cultural dimension).
- 4- Define the opportunities and benefits generated by full gender equality and their full participation in legislation and governance, including the impact on public budget allocation, labour markets and public and private decision-making.
- 5- The student's understanding of the role of education, technological means and legislation in empowering the sexes and ensuring their full participation in work.

**Goals of socio-emotional learning:**

- 1- Enabling the scholar to identify and critically teach traditional perceptions of gender roles, taking into account the cultural dimension.
- 2- Enabling study to identify and voice all forms of gender-based discrimination to address them and to fully discuss the benefits of gender empowerment.
- 3- Enable study to communicate with other people working to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex and violence, empower people who still lack the necessary capacity, and promote respect and full equality at all levels.
- 4- Enabling the student to reflect on his/her own gender identity and roles.

**Behavioral Learning Goals:**

- 1- Enable the scholar to assess and exploit his or her surroundings to enhance his or her abilities and those of other persons who are discriminated against on the basis of their sex.
- 2- Enabling, participating in and influencing gender equality decision-making processes.

- 3- Enabling the scholar to help others develop their capacity for empathy regardless of gender identity and to eliminate gender-based discrimination and violence.
- 4- Enabling the study to examine and identify forms of discrimination on the basis of sex.
- 5- Enabling the scholar to plan, implement, support and evaluate strategies to achieve gender equality.

### **Examples of ways and methods of learning processes in relation to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (gender equality):**

- Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November).
- Invite speakers who have been subjected to violence because of their identity.
- To represent roles with a view to exploring levels of integration and engaging in identity based on gender roles.
- Partnerships with groups from other regions of the world that adopt a different approach to gender issues.
- Explore the different effects of risks and natural disasters on women, girls, men and boys. (UNESCO, 2017, 19).

### **Recommendations and proposals for promoting gender equality in education for sustainable development:**

UNESCO also suggests that gender equality issues in education should be taken into account at all levels (from early childhood education to higher education), in all educational settings (i.e. formal, informal and informal) and in all areas of intervention (from planning infrastructure to teacher training). (UNESCO: <https://ar.unesco.org/themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt>)

The Commission on the Status of Women, 2016, also makes a number of recommendations and proposals for the promotion of gender equality in education to help achieve sustainable development, including:

- 1- Mainstreaming a gender perspective in education and training programmes, including science and technology.

- 2- Eliminate illiteracy among females and support the transition from school to work by developing skills to enable them to participate effectively in economic, social and cultural development, government and decision-making.
- 3- Create conditions for women's full participation and integration into the formal economy.
- 4- Promote and respect women's and girls' right to education throughout their life cycle and at all levels, in particular for those who are more lagging behind, by:
  - Universal access to quality education.
  - Ensure that they have universal, equal and non-discriminatory quality education.
  - Promote learning opportunities for all and ensure completion of primary and secondary education.
  - Eliminate gender disparities in access to all areas of primary and secondary education.
  - Ensure women's and girls' equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships.
  - Adopt positive actions to build women's and girls' leadership and influence skills.
  - Adopt measures to promote, respect and ensure women's and girls' safety in the school environment.
  - Adopt measures to support women and girls with disabilities at all levels of education and training.

UNESCO's work and proposals in promoting gender equality in education focus in particular on:

- Promote gender equality in national education laws, policies and plans.
- Monitor progress and achievements by collecting and analysing gender-disaggregated educational data and by monitoring the application of technical documents on gender equality.
- Help countries develop their educational planning capacity and train teachers on gender-sensitive methods.
- Promoting girls' and women's education through innovative partnerships such as the Global Partnership for Girls' and



Women's Education entitled "A Better Life, a Better Future".

- Seek to promote girls' and women's access to learning opportunities in both formal and non-formal education, using innovative ICT-based methods.
- Support efforts to develop gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory curricula and textbooks.
- Assist countries in addressing gender-based violence in educational settings as an obstacle to learning.
- Collaborate with Education for All partners to undertake promotional activities at the global, regional and national levels in support of girls' and women's education and gender equality, and implement policy research activities to better understand the various obstacles to gender equality and expand and strengthen the organization's expertise and knowledge base. (UNESCO: <https://ar.unesco.org/themes/tlym-lns-wlftyt>).

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