

RADICAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION FOR WOMEN

Women and education



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1. Introduction

The advent of democracy in 1994 presented South Africa with an opportunity to change the trajectory of the country and its people politically, economically and socially. However, this presented challenges in key areas of policy and equity stemming from historically discriminatory policies based on gender and race, amongst others.

Part of these challenges has been gender equity and the role of education in addressing this challenge. Since 1994, government has implemented major policy reforms to redress past inequalities in education, transform the education system, and respond to the need to increase the skills and life opportunities of all South Africans. The democratic government introduced and implemented policies, legislations and development frameworks that would sustain democracy and progressively root out all forms of discrimination, including gender inequity and inequality. As indicated in the policy discussion document, more young women than men attend universities in 60 countries; women are using their education to participate more in the labour force, making-up 40% of the global labour force and 43% of its farmers; and women now live longer than men in every single region of the world. Although there are gains that have been made through these efforts, there remains substantial work to be done with the support of decisions by policy makers and institutions such as the ANC Women's League.

There is consensus amongst policy makers, governments and human rights groups the world over, that education is central in shaping, and potentially transforming, society. Indeed experience and research has illustrated that quality education expands the opportunities and life choices for both boys and girls; men and women. It can also have positive effects in changing social attitudes for the better, embracing greater equality, and advancing peace and harmony between people. This paper therefore serves to reflect on the work and progress that has been made over the past two decades in legislature, social practice, schools and universities structures and governance to address the challenge of gender equity through the provision of public education and the platform it offers. It also provides the rationale behind specific educational programmes and recommendations on how the reach of these programmes may be expanded to continue to be current and in keeping with societal needs and developments in pursuit of equity overall, and gender equity specifically.

2. Advancing Gender Equity in Schools: An Overview

The schooling environment is the primary platform where government intervention, agency and prioritisation have an impact in the basic education sector.

The Republic of South Africa has a number of legislative procedures in place to uphold the right of women and girls, such as the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (2000), the Employment Equity Act (1998), the Domestic Violence Act (1998), and the Constitution of South Africa (1996).

When it comes to gender equity in schools, however, it should be clear from the provisions made in section 9 of the Constitution that female learners are entitled to equal opportunities and equal treatment in South African schools.

The following provisions made in the South African Schools Act (1996) are good examples of how national legislation is fulfilling its constitutional duty to ensure equal opportunities for boys and girls: Section 3 makes provision for compulsory school attendance and places a legal obligation on parents to send their children to school. The purpose of Section 3 is to protect children's right to education, whilst section 5 of the Schools Act guarantees equal access to public schools (Republic of South Africa, 1996b).

As indicated in the Policy Discussion Paper there have been developments in legislature to anchor the schooling system. These include the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 (NEPA) and the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA). This has set the standards for learner access and participation in basic education and schooling.

The growing importance of education equity is based on the premise that now, more than ever before, an individual's level of education is directly correlated to the quality of life he or she will live in the future. Therefore, an academic system that practices educational equity is a strong foundation of a society that is fair and thriving. However, inequity in education is challenging to avoid, and can be broken down into inequity due to socioeconomic standing, race, gender or disability.

Educational equity, also referred to as equity in education, is a measure of achievement, fairness, and opportunity in education. Fairness implies that factors specific to one's personal conditions should not interfere with the potential of academic success. Opportunity refers to a comprehensive standard that applies to everyone in a certain education system to ensure that government is progressive in equity, enabling equity in opportunity as a method to foster equity in outcomes and address the systematic disparities in wealth and development across race and gender. These factors are interrelated and are dependent on each other for true academic success of an educational system

3. International Agreements on Gender Equity

The most significant expressions of the rights of the girl learner are found in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) and the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. As South Africa is an active member of the United Nations, these expressions are relevant to the state and a part of the international agreements South Africa has committed to.

Further international agreements include the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the World Declaration on Education For All (1990), which stated that "the most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation." Yet despite these numerous treaties, States and the international community still largely treat education as a development goal and not as a right (GCE, 2012).

The MDG goals 2 and 3 specifically address the issue of gender equity at school and women empowerment. According to the 2013 South African MDG country report, South Africa could be considered to have reached most gender equality targets, if not exceeding them (Republic of South Africa, 2013). On the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), South Africa ranked 4th out of 87 countries in the 2012 index and was the top-ranked country in Africa (OECD Development Centre, 2012). On the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender and Development Index, South Africa ranked second in 2012, with a score slightly lower than that of the top performer, Seychelles (Lowe-Morna and Nyakujarah, 2012).

While the country performs well on the international indicators, South Africa does face a range of socio-economic and cultural challenges that continue to underpin aspects of gender inequality.

4. Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Government has made significant efforts to increase access to early childhood development (ECD) by introducing a reception programme as well as expanding the provision of services to children from birth to four years (Statistics South Africa, 2013). A country's position in the global economy depends on the competencies of its people and those competencies are formed early in life, before the child reaches the age of three years (UNICEF, 2001). Economic arguments for investing in ECD include a potential increase in productivity over a lifetime, as well as a better standard of living when the child becomes an adult. Investment in ECD contributes to higher earnings for parents and caregivers who are freer to enter the labour force.

Furthermore, exposing children to ECD results in cost savings in remedial education, health care and rehabilitation services. Intervention in children's earliest years helps to reduce social and economic disparities, including gender inequalities that divide a society, and contributes to including those traditionally excluded. There is little doubt that stimulation and development at an early stage of life plays a critical role in good health, growth, success in education and in life. Experiences and interactions with adults influence the way a child's brain develops in the early years of childhood. Additionally, adequate nutrition, good health and clean water are central to ensuring that a child develops optimally (UNICEF, 2001).

In recognising the importance of ECD for the country as a whole, in his 2009 State of the Nation Address, President Jacob Zuma underscored government's commitment to stepping up the ECD programme with the aim of ensuring universal access to Grade R and doubling the number of nought to 4-year-olds with access to ECD by 2014 (The Presidency, 2009a).

The National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) has outlined the benefits of intervening early in the lives of children. These include better school enrolment rates, retention and academic performance, higher rates of high school completion, lower levels of antisocial behaviour, higher earnings and improved adult health and longevity. Therefore the NDP proposes making early childhood

development a top priority among the measures to improve the quality of education and long-term prospects of future generations. Measures include providing dedicated resources towards ensuring that children are well cared for from an early age and receive appropriate emotional, cognitive and physical development stimulation. The definition of early childhood development should be broadened, taking into account all the development needs of a child. The expanded definition will act as the basis for all strategies and to make two years of quality pre-school enrolment for four and 5-year-olds compulsory before Grade 1.

The South African education system has fared well in advancing gender parity in ECD, Grade R and the enrolment of 7 to 15-year-olds attending schools and educational institutions. Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey (GHS) for 2002–2013, (DBE own calculations) reports that in 2013, approximately 45% of children aged 0 to 4 years old were attending an ECD facility. This is an increase of 38% since 2002, when only approximately 7% of this cohort attended an ECD facility.

With regard to attendance of ECD facilities of this age group by gender, there is gender parity. Although there were more female children in 2002, this changed from 2006 to 2012 where the percentage of children attending ECD facilities by gender is almost equal.

Table 1: Percentage of 0 to 4-year-old children attending ECD facilities by gender, 2002 to 2013

Gender	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Male	6.8	11.4	11.4	13.7	16.0	16.5	16.6	29.4	32.3	34.3	36.2	44.2
Female	7.7	11.8	11.5	14.9	16.1	15.7	16.7	29.4	32.4	34.7	36.9	45.2
Total	7.3	11.6	11.5	14.3	16.0	16.1	16.7	29.4	32.3	34.5	36.5	44.7
GPI	1.14	1.04	1.01	1.09	1.01	0.95	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.02	0.98

Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2002–2013, DBE own calculations

In 2013, approximately 85% of 5-year-old children were attending ECD educational institutions as opposed to 39% in 2002. This indicates an increase of 46% of 5-year-old children attending educational institutions between 2002 and 2012 (Statistics South Africa, GHS, 2002–2013, DBE own calculations). In 2002, there were fewer female children aged 5 years attending educational institutions. However, this has changed between 2004 and 2005, when almost equal numbers of male and female children in this age cohort were attending educational institutions. Gender parity was achieved in 2012 among 5-year-old children attending educational institutions. Gender parity for children 7 to 15 years attending schools in 2013 was achieved. Between 2012 and 2013, there is no noticeable differences between the percentage of males and females in this age group who were attending an educational institution (Statistics South Africa, GHS, 2002–2013, DBE own calculations).

5. Grade R and the impact on learning

The Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency, in partnership with the Department of Basic Education, commissioned an impact evaluation of the Grade R programme. The study confirms the strategic importance of the Grade R programme in our quest to improve education in South Africa, as well as the access to ECD that this programme has provided. Between 2001 and 2012 the numbers enrolled in Grade R programmes at ordinary schools increased more than threefold, from 242 000 to 768 000.

The study shows however, that on average the learning gains attributable to the Grade R programme have been fairly small relative to what one might have hoped to see. In some schools Grade R has contributed towards better learning, where in other schools it has not. Clearly one cannot take it for granted that Grade R is always quality Grade R. A low overall quality of instruction in some primary schools together with disadvantageous home background factors may also be working against the gains of Grade R provision.

Grade R provision provides greater benefits for mathematics learning when implemented within a well-functioning education system, this is based on the analysis of provincial groupings (Gauteng, Northern Cape and Western Cape). The study also showed the utility of having systemic data such as the Annual National Assessments (ANA) for understanding the performance of the education system. These findings confirm that in Grade R, as is the case throughout the school system, there have been significant challenges in ensuring instructional quality. This is most true of the parts of the school system serving poor learners, as the report also showed. Now that access to Grade R is approaching universal coverage, the focus of the Department will be firmly on improving quality.

An improvement plan based on recommendations from the report has already been approved by the Department of Basic Education. The improvement plan focuses on the human resource strategy for Grade R practitioners, curriculum implementation and monitoring initiatives.

The provision of ECD and Grade R, which is provided by government, have enabled women an opportunity to enrol children at an earlier age into schooling, allowing them the opportunity to pursue other interests and ambitions including work and studying. The strength of the programme, in addition to access, is the school-readiness component it offers learners; particularly those from disadvantaged homes where child stimulation is not done. The greatest challenge however, as indicated in the evaluation, is the quality of provisioning particularly in poorer communities and lower school quintiles

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6. Enrolment in compulsory schooling and further education

Compulsory schooling in South Africa is specified from 7 to 15 year olds according to South African law. Data confirms that participation of 7 to 15 year olds by gender shows that South has reached gender parity at primary level. In 2013, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) for 7 to 15 year old children was 1.

Table 2: Percentage of 7 to 15-year-old children attending an educational institution by gender, 2002 to 2013

Gender	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Male	96.0	96.7	97.4	97.6	97.4	97.6	97.8	98.3	98.6	98.7	98.5	98.6
Female	96.6	97.6	98.1	97.9	97.8	98.2	98.1	98.6	98.7	98.8	99.1	98.9
Total	96.3	97.2	97.7	97.8	97.6	97.9	97.9	98.5	98.7	98.8	98.8	98.8
GPI	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.00

Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2002-2013, DBE own calculations

The 2013 GHS found that over half a million children aged 7 to 18 years were out of school. That means that they were not attending any form of educational institution. In 2013, there were **1.2%** of children aged **7 to 15 years** who were not attending educational institutions, of this number 1.1% were females and 1.4% were male. Previous GHS surveys indicated that in 2002, more male compared to female children were out of school, with the gap closing between 2010 and 2013. In 2013, almost same proportions of female and male children aged 7 to 15 years were out of school.

Older females are more likely to be out of school than males in this age group. The 2013 GHS found that 15% of females aged **16 to 18 years** were not attending an educational institution compared to almost 13% of males in the same age group. While the percentage of females that were not attending educational institutions had decreased from approximately 21% in 2002 to almost 15% in 2013, the percentage of males remained stable at an average of 14% between 2002 and 2013.

Table 3: Percentage of 16 to 18-year-old youth not attending education institutions by gender, 2002 to 2012

Gender	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Male	14.3	14.6	14.1	14.8	15.7	13.4	15.5	15.9	15.2	14.3	12.8	12.6
Female	20.9	19.8	20.5	20.9	19.5	16.3	16.9	17.5	19.0	16.0	15.4	15.1
Total	17.6	17.2	17.3	17.8	17.5	14.8	16.2	16.7	17.1	15.1	14.1	13.9

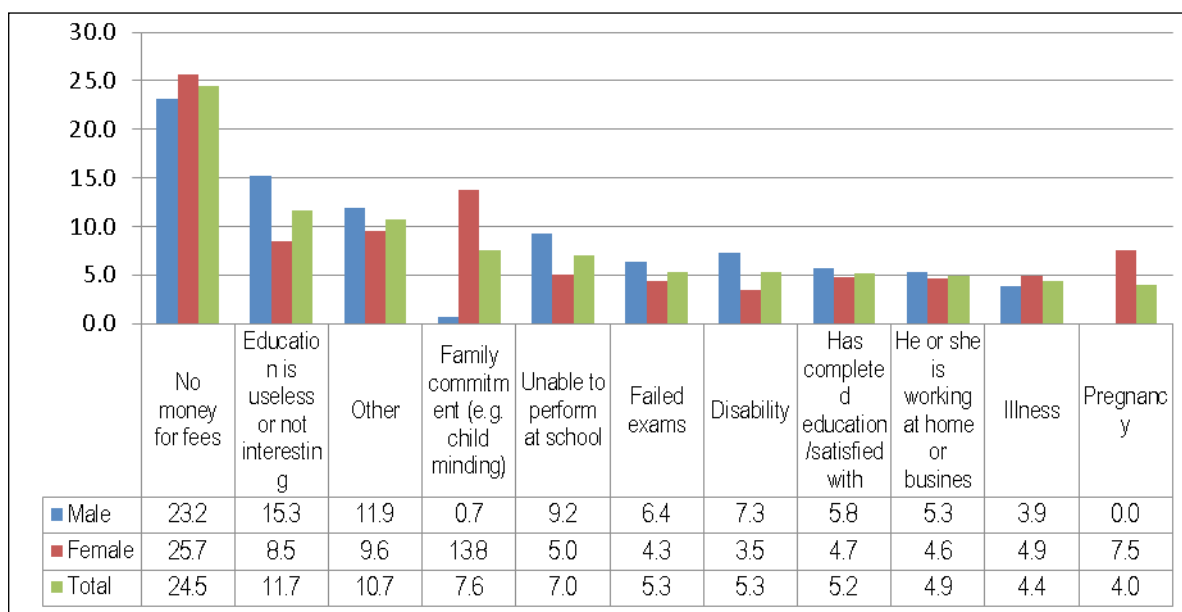
Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2002-2013, DBE own calculations

We have noted, however, sustained increases in up to 18 year olds that may be expected as completion of Matric on average takes place when learner turn 18 years old and the growing emphasis on the acquisition of completed basic education as a pre-requisite for semi-skilled and skilled employment in the labour market.

There is a notable decrease in school enrolment for 19 to 23 year olds. The main reason is speculated as possible earlier drop-out rather than an increase in learner drop-out but with the same educational attainment. Drop-out from basic education is, however, noted from the end of compulsory schooling. Enrolment for 19 to 24 year olds in any educational institution has remained on decline at the same rate between 2002 and 2011. Attention is required to encourage and improve educational attainment post compulsory schooling, considering the high unemployment rate of the country, labour market and industry requirements on education and government’s commitment to decreasing inequality.

Figure 1 below illustrates that girls’ school survival is affected disproportionately by poverty, family commitment and pregnancy compared to boys. The difference between males’ and females’ contribution to family commitment (0.7 for males and 13.8 for females) as a reason for not attending school is statistically too significant to ignore.

Figure 1: Proportion of 7 to 18 year olds reasons for non-attendance of educational institutions, 2013



Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2013, DBE own calculations

Several commentators argue that while poverty may have a number of accompanying effects on learner dropout related to affordability, responsibilities associated with child-headed households, illness and finding employment, other issues such as proximity of school which require learners to make long and tiring trips to and from school every day or affordability of school uniforms can undermine learning and make learners, in particular female learners, more vulnerable to dropping out of school.

However, the reason of unaffordability for school dropout is progressively decreasing given the Department of Basic Education’s implementation of pro-poor programmes aimed at meeting the needs of learners by minimising the effects of poverty as a barrier to learning.

These programmes include, no-fee schools (now covering quintile 1 to 3), National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) feeding close to 9 million learners every day, the Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP) among others, address some of the major barriers to learning. Although scholar transport interventions of some kind exist in all provinces, clearly not all needs are being met.

7. Barriers to Education

In spite of South Africa's democratic, gender-sensitive and human rights and equity policy framework as well as the country's laudable strides in enrolling girls in primary education specifically, and particularly in achieving gender parity at all levels of the education system, gender inequality remains endemic. In particular, the poor quality of girls' educational experiences and the consequent negative impacts on their learning outcomes, including performance in national and international examinations, remain problematic. A gender audit, and informed by the discussion at the Consultative Forum linked to it, resulted in the identification of several barriers to girls education.

Some of the most pervasive barriers include gender inequality, and in particular, its manifestations in gender based violence and other related developmental problems (most notably HIV infections and reproductive health), as well as socio-economic conditions in families and communities (Moletsane, Mitchell, and Lewin, 2010). Specifically, such barriers to girls' education include economic barriers (including family poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, lack of proper infrastructure in the home and the schools, such as safe toilets and sanitation); institutional barriers (including lack of gender budgeting, gender-biased curriculum and pedagogy, and lack of integration in service delivery); socio-cultural barriers (including poor parenting, mismatch between what schools teach and what the home teaches, and cultural factors such as initiation schools, virginity testing, early marriages and *ukuthwala* or abduction); and health issues (HIV and AIDS; teenage fertility, and the gendered burden of care in families and communities) ,(Gender Review in South African Basic Education 2010).

South African society is to a large extent patriarchal. Girls and women are accorded lower social status and find themselves under the control and authority of men (Girls Education Movement South Africa, n.d.: 1). Gender has often been identified as a powerful dynamic in shaping the lives of girls and women in families, communities, institutions and organisations (Moorosi and Moletsane, 2009). Interacting in very insidious ways with other markers of identity and social factors, it tends to impact negatively on the lives of girls and women in various contexts.

With respect to educational access and attainment, several barriers that negatively impact on girls' education emerge and these can be categorised into four areas: socio-economic, institutional, socio-cultural and health barriers.

First, with regard to socio-economic factors, among others, access to adequate and appropriate resources impact negatively on education, particularly girls' education. To illustrate, with poverty and hunger negatively skewed against women and girl children (see Moletsane et al, 2010), it is usually girls who suffer the educational consequences of such poverty (e.g., by being pulled out of school because of families' inability to pay for education,

or because of lack of school uniforms and so on). Similarly, linked to family poverty, is the lack of money for sanitary pads for girls during menstruation. Recent media reports on rural and township education suggest that some girls often miss up to four days each month because they lack money to purchase sanitary pads. This makes it difficult for girls to access education on a regular basis. However, more systematic studies that examine this phenomenon are needed if solutions are to be developed and implemented.

Within the school, in low socio-economic contexts (for example in rural and township schools) lack of physical infrastructure, including toilet facilities and proper sanitation in schools has a negative impact, particularly on the girl child (see for example, Moletsane et al, 2008).

The effects of poor infrastructure can often be dire, with huge negative impacts particularly for girls. For example, in a study in Swaziland, a photo-voice project revealed that girls often felt unsafe in broken down toilets, some without doors, as they felt (or had experienced) that "you could be raped in the toilets" (Mitchell and Larkin, 2004). Similar trends can be found in South Africa.

The second set of barriers to girls' education is related to institutional factors. These include among others, the lack of gender responsive budget in the education system as well as in the school. A lack of clear budget that clearly articulates and targets gender inequality often means that even when institutions have identified this as a priority, unless it is budgeted for, it does not get attended to. A related example is the curriculum. Developing and implementing curricula that respond to gender equity and equality is key to ensuring the quality education of girls. Closely linked to this is the need to raise teacher awareness by balancing the presentation of knowledge so that there is a clear understanding of what messages are passed on to learners with regard to learner equity and equality. Having a gender balance in the number of teachers is not enough if those teachers are not skilled in, and committed to, gender equality principles. Without this, gender stereotyping, discrimination against girls and unequal power relations between teachers and learners, between boys and girls and men and women and different role expectations between boys and girls in and around schools, will continue unabated, with negative impacts for girls. In addition, curricular and pedagogical factors such as teaching methods that tend to exclude girls, and the hidden and the taught curriculum that is often biased against girls (and women), are among the barriers to girls' education.

The third set of barriers to girls' education is related to socio-cultural factors. To illustrate, socialisation in the home and community often means that girls are taught to be subservient to boys and men, while boys are taught the reverse. Even when schools make the effort to educate children for gender equality, this is often misaligned to what the latter see and hear in the home and community. In some cases, parents do not believe that it is their responsibility to teach gender equality, passing this on to the government and the school. This is often linked to cultural taboos and dictates. For example, culture is often used to explain the non-participation of girls and women in decision-making in the home and the community, as well as their expected participation in activities and roles traditionally prescribed for them (see Magwaza, 2006). Within this context, early and forced marriages (*ukuthwalwa* or abductions of girls), continue to violate girls' access to education, particularly in the rural areas.

The fourth set of barriers to the education of girls is concerned with health issues. To illustrate, teenage fertility and pregnancy, even though it is not as much of a problem as it is feared to be (see Panday et al, 2009), continues to halt access to education for some girls. In addition, chronic illness, including AIDS-related illness and its gendered impacts on girls and women also tends to impact negatively on girls' access to education (Mitchell, 2004). In addition to the feminisation of HIV infections, because of power imbalances and the burden of care that falls heavily on girls and women, it is often the girls who are pulled out of school to care for the sick and/or siblings in the family, with dire consequences for educational access and attainment, and later for employment opportunities and income. Further, in the context of HIV and AIDS, orphaned children in child headed families are left to fend for themselves for survival and this creates a problem in securing their access to education. Chapter Four will explore these barriers further from the perspective of the gender audit.

8. Teenage Pregnancy

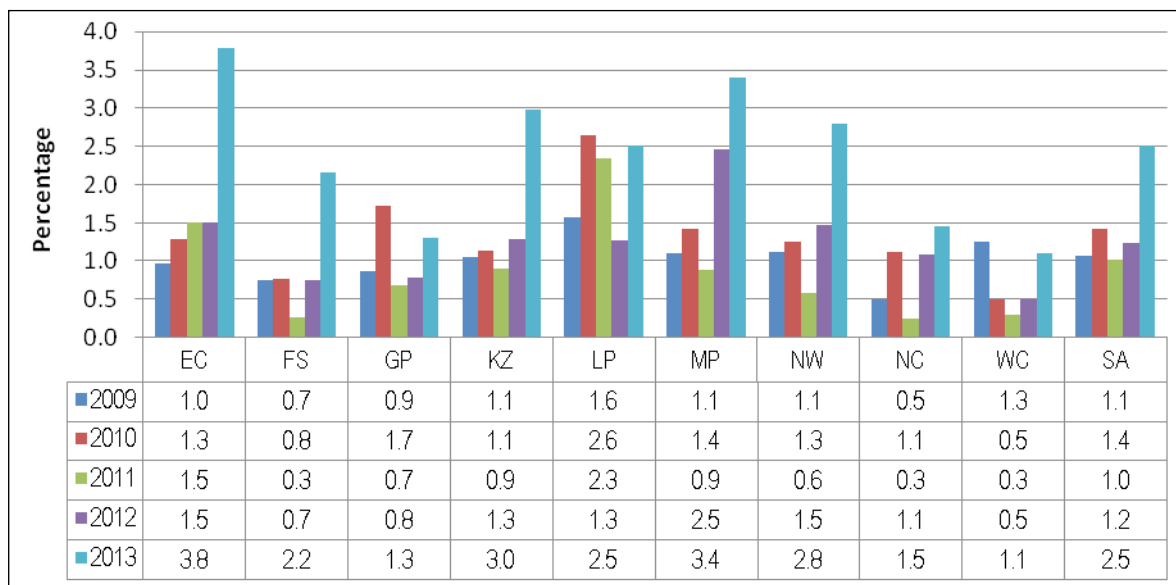
Teenage pregnancy deserves special attention considering its impact in terms of female learners in the education system and the long term inequality it causes in the system, undermining the impact of interventions intended to retain female learners in the education system.

Persistently high levels of teenage pregnancy in South Africa present a threat to the achievement of gender equality in basic education and learner drop-out for girls is frequently explained by high rates of teenage pregnancies (African Development Bank, 2009). The barriers indicated in the discussion above as explained in the socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment and peer pressure can contribute to learners falling pregnant. The repercussions for girls dropping out of school due to pregnancy cannot be underestimated.

There are multiple drivers of South Africa's high levels of teenage pregnancies. Poverty, inequalities, sexual abuse, poor information, stigma and limited access to health services create conditions which limit young girls' abilities to prevent and address unintended pregnancy. Girls dropping out of school due to pregnancy often prevent them from achieving a better quality of life. While being vulnerable to pregnancy, teenage girls are also at risk of contracting HIV and AIDS as well as other forms of sexually transmitted diseases. The role of education as a social vaccine to prevent teenage pregnancy has long been cited as a critical factor in the development of nations and in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Figure 2 below shows that in 2013, the percentage of learners attending schools who fell pregnant increased compared to 2009. In 2013, 2.5% of female learners nationally were pregnant in schools compared to 1% in 2009. The Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga have the highest percentage of learners that fell pregnant in 2013 at approximately 4% and 3% respectively.

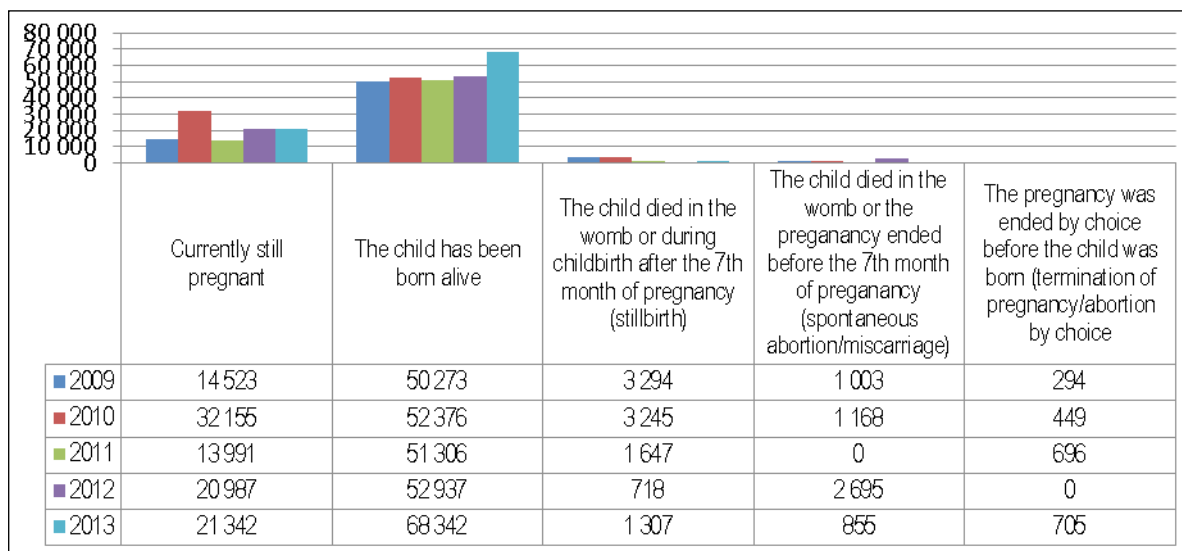
Figure 2: Percentage of female learners that fell pregnant, 2009 to 2013



Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2009-2013, DBE own calculations

Figure 3 below shows that in 2013, just over just over 68 000 learners attending schools had given birth to a child. This is slightly higher than 2009 where just over 50 000 learners indicated that they had given birth to a child. In 2013, of all the female learners attending school, approximately 21 000 were still pregnant.

Figure 3: Status of learner pregnancy, 2009 to 2013



Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2009-2013, DBE own calculations

The nature of the teenage pregnancy problem in South Africa is such that it requires active involvement of a range of stakeholders to successfully address the challenge.

A review by Wilan, April 2013, highlighted that teenage mothers who had support from their mothers were most likely to return to and remain in school. This is an especially important contribution to reduce the effect of inequality caused by pregnancy. The review highlights a significant societal problem that goes beyond the schooling environment to society and the barriers to education; approximately 30% of teenagers in South Africa report 'ever having been pregnant', the majority, unplanned. Although there have been decreases in the number of pregnancies, the rate remains unacceptably high. Of all teenage girls who fall pregnancy only about a third remain in school during the pregnancy and return following childbirth with the highest return rate amongst those in Grade 12. The particular barriers learners experience following pregnancy relate to childcare, both in terms of financial and practical support; stigma from peers and teachers; unsupportive teachers; poor academic performance prior to pregnancy which serves as a demotivating factor when considering returning to school; and balancing demands when the learner returns to the school (Wilan, 2013).

In addition to the barriers discussed, specific attention and work is required on improving the information of learners on contraceptives, STIs and HIV. Studies and various reports have indicated that learners have limited knowledge in this area. The sharing of this information is a relatively achievable area of work that should be advocated as a component towards addressing the challenges faced by women and girls.

There is also a concern that, while pregnancy removes girls from schooling and has its direct effects which we have discussed; the high pregnancy rate also reflects the exposure of young girls to HIV and other infections through their risky behaviour. There is an opportunity in this area as well, to collaborate and increase the effect and reach of current problems as well as access to medical services and programmes offered by other departments in these areas.

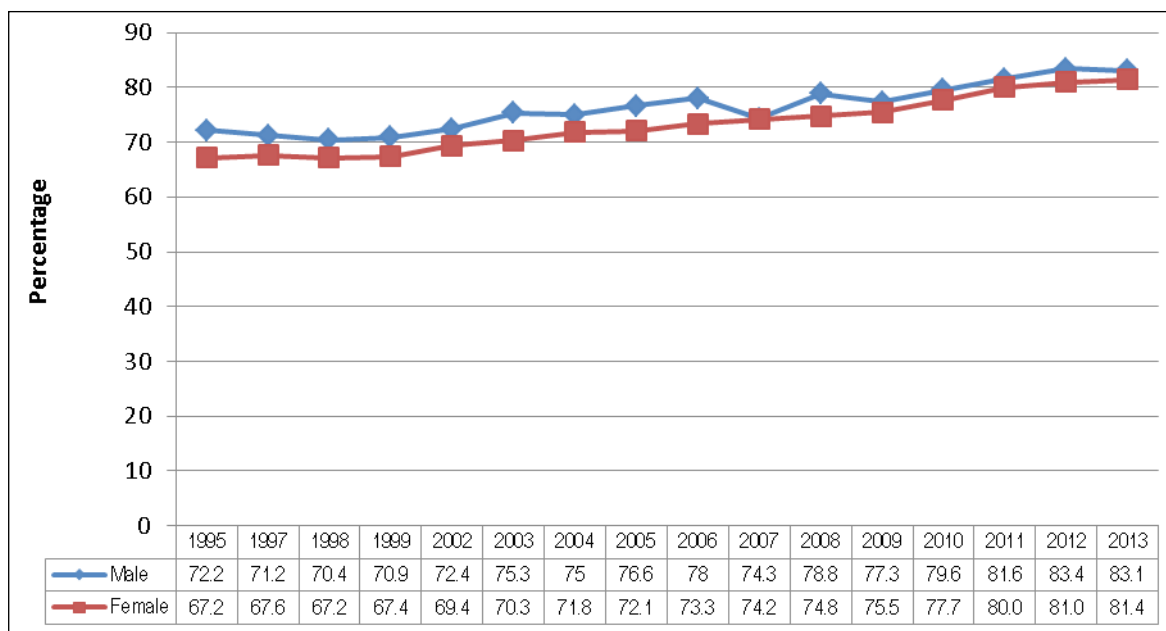
Although South African law and policy creates relatively progressive space around teenage sexuality, pregnancy and motherhood; implementation and supporting factors contributing to implementation and resultantly impact, is problematic.

The challenges discussed reflect a requirement for a response to the teenage pregnancy issue through both individual responses from parents, and individuals, but also at a structural level. A particular area of work requiring consideration is how young mothers may be supported in order to ensure that they remain in school and return to school; both for themselves but also for the outcomes of their children and the human capital lost through their drop-out and lack of participation. *The Review of Teenage Pregnancy in South Africa –Experiences of Schooling and Knowledge and access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services* review provides extensive detailed proposals to respond to this area.

9. Performance by Gender

Statistics South Africa measures the levels of literacy using attainment and repetition as markers spanning the period of 18 years. GHS, 2002–2013, (DBE own calculations) reports that in the proportion of the population aged 17 years and above who completed Grade 7 from 1995-2013 (with the exception of 1996), females are underrepresented in the cohort that completed at least a Grade 7 over this period. In 2013, more males, at 83%, were functionally literate compared to 81% of women. However, gender differentiation is not as skewed as it was in 2009 where women represented 33% of the illiterate and functionally illiterate. To some extent, **Figure 4** indicates that a higher percentage of adult men, aged 20 and older, are literate compared to women, when assuming the attainment of a Grade 7 education as a proxy for functional literacy. South Africa therefore has not yet achieved gender parity in terms of literacy among adults, although the 2013 GHS figures suggest that the gap may be closing. However, gender parity in adult literacy is likely to be achieved by 2015.

Figure 4: Percentage of the population aged 20 years and above who completed Grade 7 and above by gender, 1995 - 2013



Sources: Statistics South Africa, literacy reports 1995-1999, General Household Survey, 2002-2012, DBE own calculations

The Annual National Assessment (ANA) was initiated by the Department of Basic Education to assess and improve the levels of literacy and numeracy in the country’s schools. The tests were administered nationally to Grades 3 and 6 and this year to Grade 9 learners in public schools. The assessment is currently in its third year.

In the analysis of Grade 3 learners’ performance by gender, it is notable that female learners performed better than the male learners over the two years, regardless of level and subject. The Department’s analysis indicates that female learners attained a pass rate (minimum 50%) while male learners performed below the required minimum pass rate in the literacy assessment.

In the analysis of Grade 6 learner performance by gender, it is notable that female learners performed better than the male learners over the two years, regardless of level and subject. In the numeracy assessments female learners (27.5%) performed better than male learners (25.8%) in 2012 and in 2013 (female learners performed at 40.4% and male learners at 37.6%). Female learners performed at level 3 while male learners performed at level 2. This means that female learners attained a pass rate (minimum 50%) while male learners performed below the required minimum in the literacy assessment.

In the analysis of Grade 6 learner performance by gender, it is notable that female learners performed better than the male learners over the two years regardless of level and subject. Regardless of the low average in the numeracy assessments female learners (13.4%) performed better than male learners (11.9%) in the 2012 and the in 2013 (female learners performed at 14.8% and male learners at 13.1%). Grade 9 learners performed at level 1 in their numeracy assessment.

Regardless of grade, female learners have performed better than male learners across the three grades included in the analysis. This has been consistent regardless of subject and province and overall outcomes that female learners generally perform better than male learners in the assessments.

However, the performance of female learners in primary school contrasts with the performance of female learners in secondary school, in particular at Grade 12, where male learners perform better than female learners as observed in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) analysis.

The total number of learners who wrote for the NSC in 2013 was 562 112. Of those who wrote a total of 439 779 (78.2%) passed their matric. **Table 5** below illustrates the provincial representation of learners who wrote and achieved by province. Male learners performed better than female learners.

Table 4: Learner Achievement by Gender, 2013

Province	Gender	2013					
		Wrote		Achieved		% Achieved	
		Gender	Total Wrote	Gender	Total Achieved	Gender	Total
EC	Male	32 010	72 138	21 911	46 840	68.5	64.9
	Female	40 128		24 929		62.1	
FS	Male	12 588	27 105	11 199	23 689	89.0	87.4
	Female	14 517		12 490		86.0	
GP	Male	43 798	97 897	38 326	85 122	87.5	87.0
	Female	54 099		46 796		86.5	
KZN	Male	65 291	145 278	50 958	112 403	78.0	77.4
	Female	79 987		61 445		76.8	
LP	Male	38 300	82 483	28 982	59 184	75.7	71.8
	Female	44 183		30 202		68.4	
MP	Male	23 044	50 053	18 359	38 836	79.7	77.6
	Female	27 009		20 477		75.8	
NC	Male	13 056	29 140	11 598	25 414	88.8	87.2
	Female	16 084		13 816		85.8	
NW	Male	4 756	10 403	3 603	7 749	75.8	74.5
	Female	5 647		4 146		73.4	
WC	Male	20 628	47 615	17 805	40 542	86.3	85.1
	Female	26 987		22 737		84.3	
National	Male	253 471	562 112	20 274	439 779	80.0	78.2
	Female	308 641		23 703		76.8	

As shown in **Table 6** below the majority (308 641) of learners who wrote in 2012 were female, however males performed better in the examination (80%) than female learners who constituted 76.8% of the overall pass rate. This is reiterated though the provincial performance of male learners who performed better than the female learners in all the provinces. Although the variations in the percentages do not seem significant it is still worth noting that this is common throughout all nine provinces.

Table 5: Learner Achievement by Gender, 2012

Province	Gender	2012					
		Wrote		Achieved		% Achieved	
		Gender	Total Wrote	Gender	Total Achieved	Gender	Total
EC	Male	28 438	63 989	18 235	39 443	64.1	61.6
	Female	35 551		21 208		59.7	
FS	Male	11 428	24 265	9 477	19 676	82.9	81.1
	Female	12 837		10 199		79.5	
GP	Male	40 274	89 627	34 080	75 214	84.6	83.9
	Female	49 353		41 134		83.3	
KZN	Male	59 399	127 253	43 826	93 003	73.8	73.1
	Female	67 854		49 177		72.5	
LP	Male	35 986	77 360	25 525	51 745	70.9	66.9
	Female	41 374		26 220		63.4	
MP	Male	22 015	47 889	15 898	33 504	72.6	70.0
	Female	25 874		17 515		67.7	
NC	Male	12 819	27 174	10 470	21 609	81.7	79.5
	Female	14 355		11 139		77.6	
NW	Male	4 082	8 925	3 119	6 661	76.4	74.6
	Female	4 843		3 542		73.1	
WC	Male	19 361	44 670	16 335	36 974	84.4	82.8
	Female	25 309		20 639		81.5	
National	Male	233 802	511 152	117 056	377 829	75.7	73.9
	Female	277 350		200 773		72.4	

Past results indicate there is a trend for male learners to outperform the female learners in the NSC. In 2011 the number of female learners enrolled was 265 244 which were more than the male learners (230 846). However, the female learners (68.6%) were out performed by the male learners at 71.9%. Similarly, in 2012 more female learners (277 350) were enrolled than male learners (233 802). In spite of the high enrolment of female learners, they performed slightly poorer (at 72.4%) than the male learners who comprised 75.7% of the overall pass rate (73.9%).

The analysis by gender shows that in general female learners perform poorly compared to male learners in the NSC examinations. This has major implications for female learner's life chances, in particular for their career opportunities and entrance into tertiary institutions. This phenomenon is more explicit in the performance of girls in Science, Maths and Technology.

Table 6: Learner Performance in Maths and Science from 2011-2013, by Gender

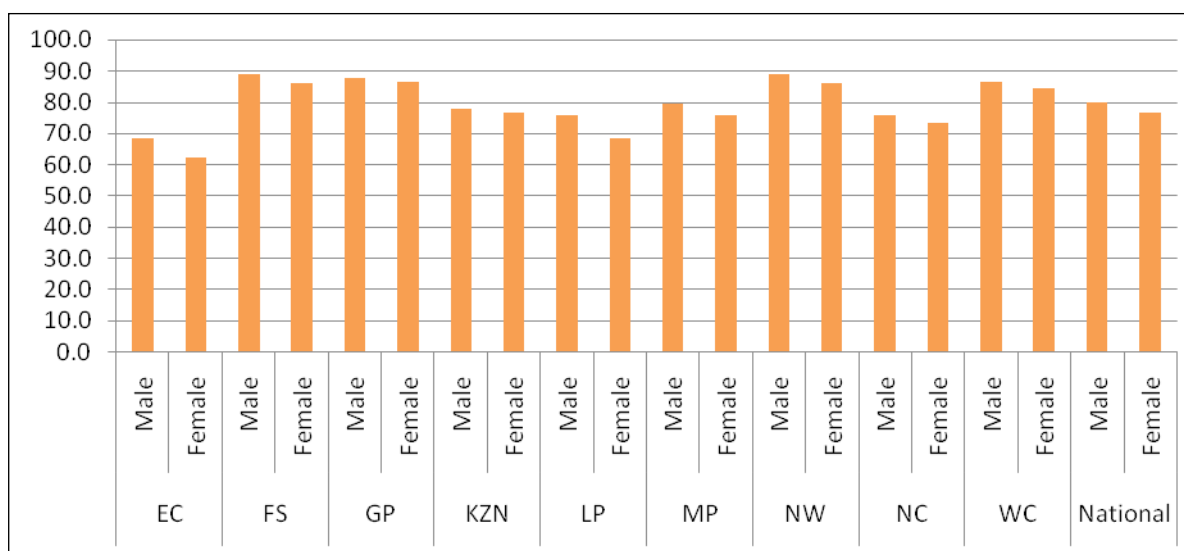
Subject		Mathematics			Physical Science		
Year	Gender	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
2011	Total Wrote	119 645	107 990	224 635	92 984	87 601	180 585
	Achieved 30% and above	50 158	53 875	104 033	46 683	49 758	96 441
	% Achieved	41.9	51.3	46.3	50.2	56.8	53.4
2012	Total Wrote	122 620	103 254	225 874	94 279	84 915	179 194
	Achieved 30% and above	60 322	61 648	121 970	55 575	54 343	109 918
	% Achieved	49.2	59.7	54.0	58.9	64.0	61.3
2013	Total Wrote	132 784	108 725	241 509	97 995	86 388	184 383
	Achieved 30% and above	72 069	70 957	142 666	64 376	59 830	124 206
	% Achieved	54.3	64.9	59.9	65.1	69.3	67.4

In Mathematics over the period of 2011-2013 male learners performed better than female learners. In 2011, of the 46% who passed Mathematics, 51.3% were male learners while only 41.9% were female learners. Similarly in 2012 and 2013, male learners (59.7% and 64.9 respectively) performed better than female learners (49.2% and 54.3% respectively).

In Physical Science over the period of 2011-2013 male learners performed better than female learners. In 2011 of the 53.4% who passed Science, 56.8% were male learners while only 50.2% were female learners. Similarly in 2012 and 2013 male learners (64.9 % and 69.3% respectively) performed better than female learners (58.9% and 65.1% respectively). This is despite the fact that more female learners than male learners enrolled for both Mathematics and Physical Science. Consequently, young female learners leave school and higher institutions without the competencies required to occupy technical careers in Maths, Science and Technology.

Although education attainment had been increasing, the education of black South Africans, including girls, continues to lag behind at Grade 12. More concerning is that female learner continues to perform poorly in the STEM subjects. Such poor performance by school going girls threatens the advancement of gender equity in the country. Studies seem to indicate that girls shy away from choosing mathematics and science as they perceive these to be “too hard for girls or too masculine”. It would seem that teachers themselves perpetuate this stereotyping.

Figure 5: Percentage of 2013 NSC examination passes by gender



Source: DBE, 2013 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examination Results

The impact of girls’ educational levels is stressed by many researchers. It has a critical impact on the development and empowerment of women in society. Educational systems that ignore gender in an unequal society tend to reinforce occupational segregation, which concentrates women in lower-paying, less desirable jobs. While it is clear that literacy levels and access to education for females are improving, much still remains to be done.

10. Violence in Schools

Violence, including gender based violence continues to plague public schools. An extensive body of research produced over the last decade on violence in schools shows that not only is violence common, but it is often normalised, and increasingly gendered in nature (Moletsane, 2010).]\

The SAHRC (2008) report that more than 40% of children interviewed said they had been the victims of crime at school; a fifth of sexual assaults committed against South African children occur at school; and the school was the most common site of assault and robbery against learners. More recently, the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP)(2012) states that “more than a fifth of learners had experienced violence at school” (p. xi), specifically:

- **12.2%** had been **threatened** with violence by someone at school
- **6.3%** had been **assaulted**
- **4.7%** had been **sexually assaulted or raped**
- **4.5%** had been **robbed** at school
- **20%** had experienced **cyber-bullying or violence**

This study shows that the rates of violence in South African schools are high all-round, with the frequency of sexual assault being concomitantly high as tabulated below.

Table 7: Frequency of victimisation at schools

Frequency of victimisation at school (%)	Once		Twice		Thrice	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Theft	35.0	38.7	26.2	19.7	38.7	41.6
Verbal abuse	29.9	-	27.9	-	42.3	-
Threatened	35.5	50.8	29.5	23.9	35.0	25.1
Assault	26.6	59.7	14.2	18.8	59.2	21.5
Robbery	29.2	48.0	44.3	22.1	25.9	29.9
Sexual assault	52.9	47.6	24.7	18.6	22.4	33.8

As far as learners are concerned, violence affects both male and female learners. However, girls are more likely to experience sexual, and gender based violence, including acts of sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape at far higher levels than male learners. Boys usually experience higher levels of physical assaults.

The *Sexual Violence by Educators in South Africa: Gaps in Accountability* produced by CALS (2014) puts the spotlight on the high prevalence of educators’ complicity or perpetration of sexual violence and abuse in schools. The report provides evidence of sexual impunity of male teachers engaging in sexual activities with learners.

Gender based violence is a pervasive social ill that remains a challenge in schools and education institutions. Although the effects of gender based violence on the girl child’s education performance and consequently her life chances have not been adequately researched in South Africa, the negative impact is evident across schools in the country.

11. Employment in the education sector by gender

Gender equity is not limited to learners alone but also encompasses the profession of education itself. This is particularly important because there is increasing invisibility of the gender inequalities that exist within the education profession due to the removal of many of the overt discriminatory structures within the public sector such as unequal pay and allowances (DBE Draft Gender Equity Policy Framework, 2014).

In 2012 the average number of publicly employed educators in the system was approximately 383 000. In terms of gender composition females composed, on average, two-thirds of the educator population. Transformation of the education sector in relation to gender is key to advancing the gender equity agenda. This should translate at all levels of the system including departmental and school level being equitable.

As a female-dominated profession, teaching is often devalued, creating negative outcomes for female. Currently, women are largely absent in top leadership positions in a sector in which they form a majority of the workforce (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009) and subsequently management of the department as practised by women is also absent. For instance (Arends, 2007, in DBE draft Gender Equity Policy Framework, 2014), reporting on the skewed gender representivity at management level states that: “School management is predominantly male, who constitute 62 per cent of principals and 58 per cent of deputy principals. This is not a representative picture of the education profession in terms of gender, taking into account that female educators outnumber male educators 2 to 1 and in terms of age and experience are on an equivalent footing with their male counterparts” (p. 14). This can be seen in the figure below.

12. Educators by gender

Overall there is high percentage of female teachers in post level 1 at above 66% between 2008 and 2012.

Figure 6: Percentage of teachers by gender 2008-2012

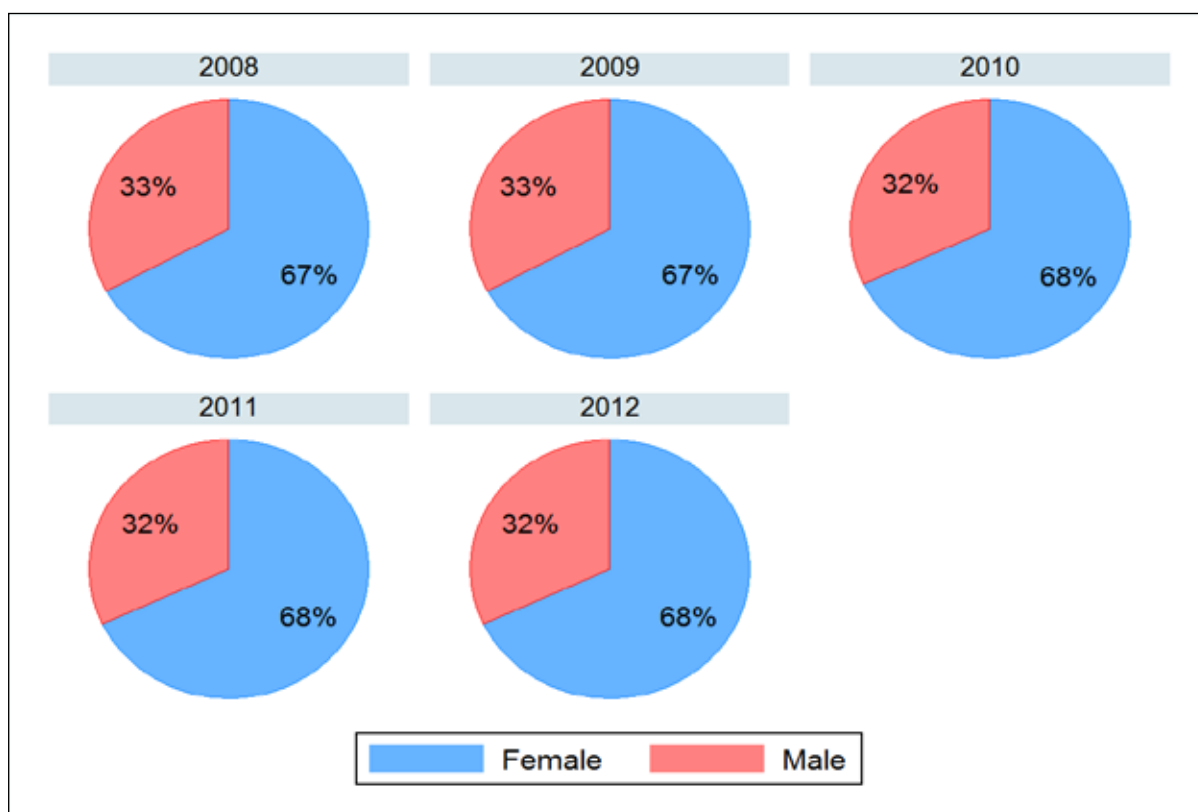


Figure 6 and 7 shows the number of teacher by post level and gender. It is apparent that more female teachers in post level 1 and 2 (teachers and Heads of Department posts). However, for post level 3 and 4 (Deputy Principal and Principal levels, there are more male teachers than females teachers).

Figure 7: Educators by post level and gender, August 2014

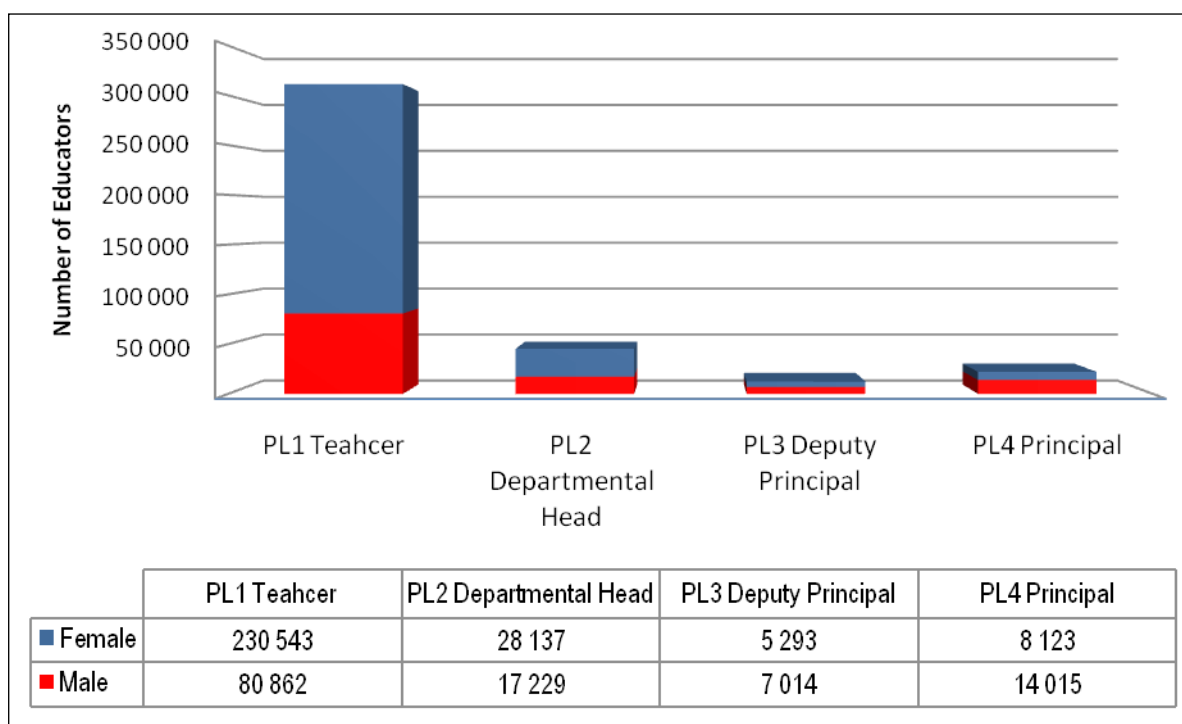
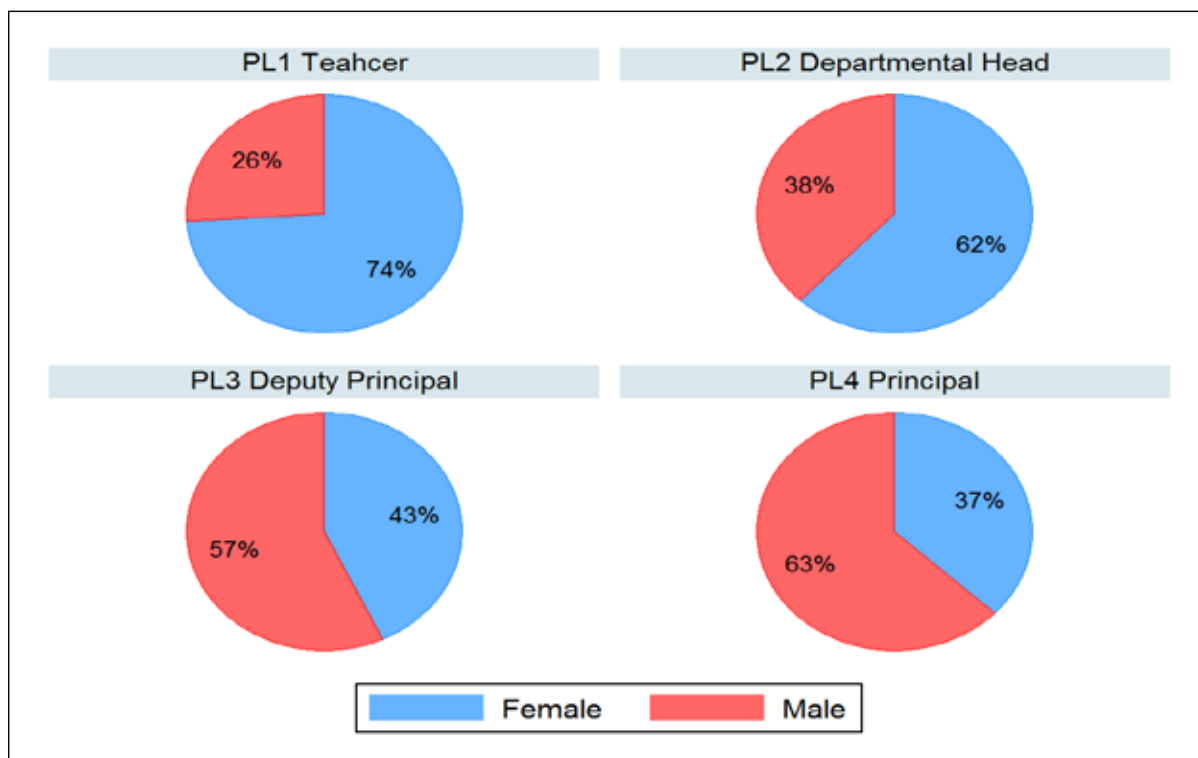


Figure 8: Post levels 1 to 4 by gender, August 2014



The management of education is therefore largely done by men and is therefore defined by them (DBE draft Gender Equity Policy Framework, 2014). Studies (Chisholm, 2001; Diko, 2007; Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009) indicate a reluctance by women to enter management as they view it as masculine and unsupportive of their other roles as mothers and partners. While there is every indication that the Department of Basic Education is trying to meet the Employment Equity conditions, more is needed to ensure that women get onto the leadership track within the department.

Equity in education must be seen in light of several mutually supporting components: schools operate as both spaces for the transmission and transformation of cultures, values and norms through both formal and informal means and as workplaces. The education system is a crucial link in the reproduction of social inequalities (and by extension then, in their subversion). Schools then, “do not simply ratify externally generated inequalities, but also produce or actively reproduce inequalities, thereby damaging some groups, especially working class, ethnic minorities and females” (Benadusi, 2002, p. 32). Hence the school must be reclaimed as a site to advance gender equality and not subvert it.

The promotion of equitable schooling is interlinked with goals beyond the learners themselves, to the broader social transformation of society and empowerment of women. Learners benefit from measures that promote equitable representation in professional leadership and management positions or increase the influence and authority of leaders who are women; and strategies that counter and eliminate sexism in schools as workplaces and sexual harassment and gender violence throughout the entire education system (DBE draft Gender Equity Policy Framework, 2014).

More still needs to be done to ensure gender equity within the education sector in order to break down obstacles to women’s advancement. Given that currently, more women than men are to be found in the lower ranks of the public sector (Commission for Employment Equity, 2013), it can be assumed that this applies to the Department too. There is need to draw more women into leadership preparation. This may empower women who may not have had the opportunities at or experiences of leadership that come more naturally to men in male dominated systems (Sperandio, 2011, in DBE Draft Gender Equity Policy Framework, 2014). In addition, there is the need to ensure that when women are appointed to leadership positions, the latter are positions that require more responsibility and a demonstration of their leadership skills, rather than merely providing support to other positions that are seen to hold more weight within the Department.

13. Higher Education and Training Sector

The relationship between employment trends and education levels, support the notion that post-schooling and higher education encourage sustainable livelihoods by opening up economic opportunities and self-employment for the youth. With this same understanding regarding the significance of acquiring post-school training and education, in 1994 South Africa’s government deracialised and expanded access to the higher education and training sector. Government has identified access to this sector as one of the elementary means to addressing South Africa’s persisting inequality level. Therefore, higher education and training opportunities have been seen as one of the greatest social demands and government consistently devoted a majority of the fiscus to the education sector, to mainly benefit the youth. In the allocation of public expenditure towards higher education, in the period 2006 to 2009, South Africa saw a 39.2 per centage increase in public expenditure per higher education student.

Furthermore, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) allocated R25 billion in loans and bursaries to 991 759 university and FET College students in the period 1991 to 2011. According to the 2006 and 2011 National Budget Review, public expenditure on education as a percent of total government expenditure was 19 per cent in 2006 and grew to 21.3 per cent in 2011.

The Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme and Social Work Scholarship are examples of other programmes that, through NSFAS, have been making significant financial contributions towards skilling the youth. Funza Lushaka promotes teaching in areas of national priority in public schools. Between 2007 and 2009, the number of students who were granted full-cost bursaries almost tripled, from 3 669 and 9 190 (valued at R110 million and R380 million respectively). There is a significant difference between the number of women accessing the Funza Lushaka bursary compared to men. The table below give a breakdown of gender per entry year.

Table 8: Access to Funza Lushaka bursary by gender, 2007-2014

Gender	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	(blank)	Grand Total
Female	2342	1910	3874	2594	1170	3814	4443	2716	33	22896
Male	1320	968	1825	1151	552	1720	2240	1578	24	11378
Grand Total	3662	2878	5699	3745	1722	5534	6683	4294	57	34274

Dataset was collated from various NSFAS reports(2007-2013) and DBE’s 2014 recommended list.

(Please note that there are 57 records that are without entry years. These students were submitted by NSFAS without funds allocated against their names. Please note that 2014 stats are not definitive, these numbers may change by the end of financial year.)

The Social Work programme which provides scholarships to prospective and current social work students, exponentially increased its funding from 1 263 students in 2007 to 5 658 student in 2009.

In return to these investments, South Africa is noted to have made massive gains in promoting access to post-school education and training programmes. Since 1994, enrolments in universities, technikons and teacher training colleges has almost doubles in size, from 495 356 in 1994 to 938 201 in 2011 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011).

A further interrogation of these statistics shows that, during the period at hand, training colleges had the slowest expansion with regards to enrolment. After the mergers of a number of these higher education and training institutions, the public FET sector continued to attract low levels of students. The Department of Higher Education and Training cite poor marketing, lack of capacity and a poor image as causes for the low enrolment rates in these institutions. Enrolments have recently improved, estimated to have increased from 271 900 in 2000 to about 400 000 in 2011. The increase in uptake followed various government interventions and incentives offered to students such as financial assistance which increased from R100 million in 2007 to R1.7 billion in 2012, and the FET plan which seeks to market FETs as institutions of choice. Further policy focus, targets and partnerships such as outlined in the National Skills Accord which is a partnership from the New Growth Path, promise further growth.

In the 20 year period since 1994, the notable challenge in the post-schooling sector has been the inability of the investments made into this sector to transition to quality programmes. The growth in Science, Engineering and Technology enrolments in higher education institutions, which is viewed as critical for stepping up economic development, have been increasing steadily.

According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (2013), graduation rates in these areas between 2000 and 2009 have grown by 5.5 percent. Therefore, the enrolment rates have improved. However, South Africa has high levels of graduate drop-outs and graduate unemployment rates as the quality of education and training is mixed. South Africa has a hand-full of universities and research institutions that are ranked as world-class whilst the quality of programmes in the majority of higher education and training institutions have been put into question. Another critical challenge for the youth in post-schooling has been poor educational outcomes which are a result of lack of access to the adequate resources, teacher shortage, and no clear pathways and guidance to further learning opportunities. It is still a phenomenon that students entering the post-schooling system have not attained the marks and points to access higher education and training. Therefore, the high investments should be coupled and integrated into the national skills development system. Finally, youth development in post-schooling should continue being enhanced as a mainstream activity.

14. Progress in higher education and training

University enrolment has almost doubled in volume, increasing from 495 356 at universities, technikons and teacher training colleges in 1994 to 938 201 at public universities and universities of technology in 2011. Another statistic paints the story from a different perspective: in 1995, only 9 per cent of Africans of university-going age were enrolled in universities, compared to 61 percent of the white population. In 2006, the number for Africans increased to 12 per cent of the population and for whites marginally decreased to 59 percent of the population.

Significantly, women now outnumber male enrolments in higher education. In 1993, women made up 43 percent of enrolments in universities and technikons (Council on Higher Education, 1999). By 1997, the proportions were almost even (Council on Higher Education, 1999), with women then stretching ahead as the majority in HEIs. By 2011, women made up 54 percent of all students enrolled in contact programmes, and 63 percent of those enrolled in distance education programmes (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013).

Government has made huge strides in increasing access to higher education. As many as 991 759 student beneficiaries received R25 billion in National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) loans and bursaries between 1991 and 2011. Enrolments at FET colleges recently surged from 271 900 in 2000 to just more than 400 000 in 2011. Bursaries to FET college students increased from R100 million in 2007 to R1.7 billion in 2012, benefiting some 237 908 students between 2009 and 2011.

However, the broader challenges that affect the intake and uptake of women into higher education institutions are acknowledged by the National Development Plan. The NDP has been accepted as government policy, comments that “despite the significant increases in enrolment a number of challenges remain” (NPC, 2011:16). For one, “throughput rates have not improved as fast as enrolment rates”; for another, under-prepared students have meant universities needing to establish academic development programmes and being sometimes “ill-equipped to do so” (ibid.:16). As a consequence, universities have not been “able to produce the number and quality of graduates demanded by the country” (ibid.:16). Since “race remains a major determinant of graduation rates”, this has “major implications for social mobility and...for overcoming the inequalities of apartheid” (ibid.:16).

However, the Women in Science Programme has been one of the instruments to implement and measure the extent of equality in educational opportunities pursued by both government and institutions of learning. Until 1998, there were fewer females entering this field, but the trend shows that the number of females enrolled in the SET field is increasing, and more females are graduating. What is of concern is the proportionally lower number of graduates in this important field for both males and females in South Africa, despite the positive trend since 2006. Positive media coverage promoting the role of women in science may have contributed to the number of females enrolled in the SET fields of education. A television series entitled *Women in Science*, produced in partnership with the Department of Science and Technology, has been screened on national television since 2007. This series has served to educate and expose young girls to careers in SET, and also highlighted the impact of women scientists in South Africa (Background paper Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equity).

National Certificate (Vocational) NC(V) success rates improved from a rate of 10 percent in 2009 for NC(V) level 1 to 43 per cent in 2012. While opportunities for education and training have opened up, success in increasing female intake and completion to final graduation has needed time to catch up. Success in artisanal training has also been a challenge in terms of gender enrollment. It is further worth mentioning that by 2009, 85 percent of unemployed people were trained on learnerships, and out of that,

115 percent completed the training. Out of this total, 81 per cent were Africans, 53 per cent were female and 3 per cent were people with disabilities (Department of Labour, 2009).

The Department of Science and Technology reports that there has been significant progress in establishing greater levels of gender equity in the higher education sector with the percentage of women enrolment having increased from 48% in 1996 to 58% in 2012. However, there is also a demographic drop off at higher levels of study, with women constituting only 48% and 47% of total master's and doctoral enrolments, respectively (2012 data). This is a challenge, given that women constitute approximately 52% of the population. However, women's percentage enrolment at Honours level is above 60%.

In science, engineering and technology (SET) fields, women's enrolment as a percentage of total SET enrolment increased from 43,8% in 2000 to 45% in 2012; and women's graduation as a percentage of total SET graduation increased from 48,4% to 51% during the same period. This still remains a challenge as both enrolments and graduations by women have not gone beyond 50% of the total SET enrolments and graduations.

While the above paragraphs have largely focused on enrolments, women have made great strides in constituting a major proportion of completing students at undergraduate and honours levels. In 2012, women constituted 62% of all Honours graduates, 48% of all masters, and 42% of all doctoral graduates in 2012.

In terms of intervening at postgraduate levels, the Minister of Science and Technology approved the guidelines for improving equity in the distribution of DST/NRF bursaries and fellowships in 2013. The guidelines are grounded on three fundamental principles: representivity, improved efficiencies, and prioritisation of SET disciplines. The guidelines stipulate that 55% of the postgraduate students supported through bursaries should be women. This target has since been met even though a lower proportion of women were supported at doctoral level. In 2012/13, women constituted 56% of all supported honours students, 50% of all supported master's students, and 48% of supported doctoral students. In the 2013/14 financial year, of the 9 771 supported students, 6 110 (63%) were black and 5 186 (53%) were women.

The DST has, since 2003, been hosting the Women in Science Awards with the aim of increasing the number of prominent women scientists and their access to research professions in the country, and to profile the winners as role models for younger women scientists and girls countrywide. These awards not only reward excellence for well established researchers but are also meant to provide incentives for postgraduate students. The winners of Women in Science Awards participate in other initiatives of the DST and/or its stakeholders, such as SET awareness promotion by taking part in lectures and seminars during the National Science Week and SET festivals.

15. Emerging researchers

The increasing proportion of women (and black) enrolments in higher education means that the country is beginning to tap into a wider pool of its human resources base. In building up a resilient human capital development pipeline, the DST founded a dedicated instrument to support women and black researchers –both groups remain under-represented in the science and research system.

In the five years between 2008/9 and 2013/14, the percentage of women postdoctoral fellows supported by the DST through the NRF increased from 41% students to 44%, with the total number of postdoctoral fellows having almost tripled in the same period (increased from 222 to 645). The DST-NRF Thuthuka programme, with a focus on supporting emerging black and women researchers, has awarded 1 058 research grants to 698 women and 594 black researchers since 2008, and in the process invested close to R200m. The recent recapitalisation of emerging researchers' category by the DST has seen the proportion of women researchers supported by the NRF increase from 34% in 2012/13 to 41% in 2013/14. The DST has also established the career advancement fellowship awards with the purpose of increasing the pool of researchers who can go on to be established researchers.

16. Established researchers

Women constituted 53% of all academic staff at universities even though significantly fewer (29%) occupied professorial positions in 2012. The proportion of women occupying professorial positions only increased by 3 percentage points between 2008 and 2012. Other instruments dedicated to support established researchers show similar trends, albeit with modest but encouraging gains recently. The proportion of women rated by the NRF has increased 26% in 2008/9 to 30% in 2012/13, with the number of rated researchers having increased from 1 914 to 2 638 in the same period. Women still remain largely underrepresented in established researchers support programmes like the South African Research Chairs Initiative and the Centres of Excellence. It is this context that the DST has taken a decision to limit the awards of the new cohort of 20 new research chairs to women. Continentally, and according to the 2011 Africa Innovation Outlook report, Tanzania and South Africa are leaders in terms of the participation of women in R&D with women accounting for 40% of all researchers in Tanzania, and 43% of all researchers in South Africa – compared to an OECD average of 34%.

17. Workplace Preparation Programmes

In increasing the pool of human resource available for the research and science system, the DST is implementing an internship programme to provide workplace experiences for SET graduates. Since its inception in 2005, a total of 2 110 interns have participated in the programme, and there are 711 interns currently placed in 6 institutions in 2014/15. Of the interns who have completed the programme, 50% have been absorbed into the job market and 23% have pursued the option of furthering their studies. Since inception, the programme has consistently achieved its set equity targets of 80% blacks and 50% women.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment in terms of access has been Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET). Annual enrolment at public adult learning centres (PALCs) has averaged just below 300 000 annually between 1999 and 2011.

However, the Kha Ri Gude literacy programme has been a success, with good participation. This programme provided job opportunities for about 42 000 volunteers as at the end of March 2014 to teach adult learners.

Figure 9 shows that more females than males enrolled in Kha Ri Gude literacy programme between 2008 and 2013.

Figure 9: Learners enrolled in Kha Ri Gude Literacy programme by gender, 2008-2013

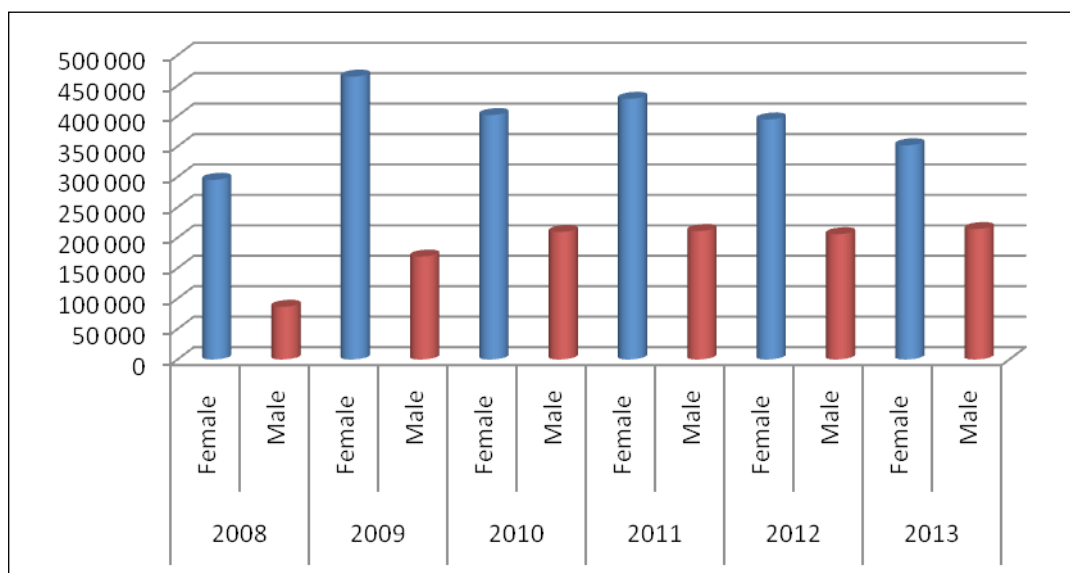
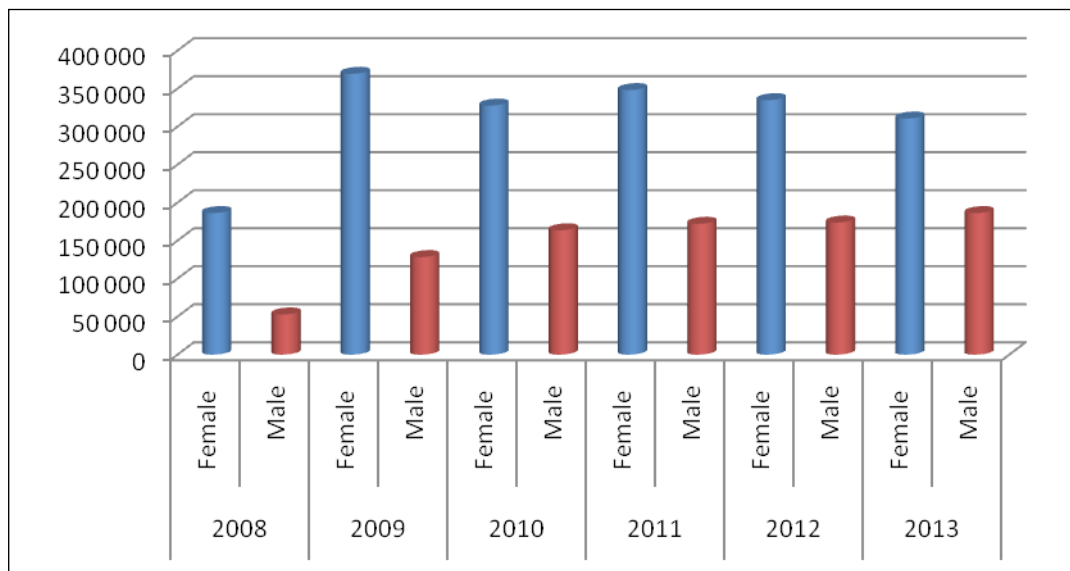


Figure 10 shows that more females than males successfully completed the Kha Ri Gude Literacy programme between 2008 and 2013.

Figure 10: Learners completed Kha Ri Gude Literacy programme by gender, 2008-2013



18. Key considerations for radical transformation

18.1 Recommendation regarding Early Childhood Development

As discussed, the evaluation of the current state of Grade R shows that although access has increased tremendously in the past years, the quality of Grade R however, remains a challenge. The Basic Education MTSF 2014-2019 has emphasised the important of that coverage reaches 100% of learners eligible to attend Grade R within this MTSF. Beyond coverage, as mentioned above, the 2014-2019 MTSF concentrates on improving the quality of the current one year Grade R. In addition, DBE should ensure that the whole ECD sector has in place appropriate curricula, LTSM and norms for qualifications of ECD practitioners.

Support for the setting of the qualifications of Grade R practitioners to NQF level 6 would enable Grade R to provide the opportunity for parents and women specifically, to continue to engage and participate in the economy as the responsibility for learners is shared from an earlier age. In addition, it would enable the impact of Grade R to be more meaningful in terms of the quality of learning. There is consensus from literature around the critical importance of the early years of a child's life for cognitive, behavioural and social development. The literature shows that early educational interventions prove more cost-effective than later remedial interventions, and can reduce the educational disadvantage faced by poor children.

18.2 Recommendations regarding teenage pregnancy

Critical work is required in ensuring the implementation of policies and legislature on teenage pregnancy with a focus on effective and accurate implementation amongst schools, and school management and support structures; as well as healthcare professionals. Proposals to address this equity issue decisively have included consideration of stringer consequences for schools that violate policies in this area. We believe that poor accountability in the public sector in general and regarding teenage pregnancy specifically hinders progress in gender equity in this area.

There is also a gap in terms of policy and programmes for the support of teenage mothers in their role as carers for their babies and returning to school. This requires proper consideration with costing and planning for a sustained approach and response in support of this area.

The area of providing advocacy as well as expanding the depth and reach of information of contraceptives through collaborations and advocacy is also an important recommendation to start to reduce the impact and extent of teenage pregnancy in the system.

Much of the overview of gender progress in basic education has been gleaned from country reports and surveys which tend to weigh heavily on access rather than providing insight into the quality that often determines education outcomes and life chances of girl learners. Although there is ample evidence that gender parity has been achieved at all levels of the education system the overall performance of girls in the education context continues to lag behind their male counterparts. The key challenge for the education sector, which is picked up on again further below, is now enhancing the quality of learning and teaching (DPME, 2014).

Furthermore, although girls and women continue to be the primary beneficiaries of gender policies and programmes, boys and men as gendered beings and their potential to advance or stifle gender equity has to inform and shape these policies and programmes. Simplistic views of female disadvantage must be replaced by a complex view of gender as intersecting with other social identity markers (such as age, race, sexuality, disability, geography, etc.) in ways that re/produce various inequalities (Unterhalter, 2005).

The literature review and interviews conducted for the development of the department's draft Gender Equity Policy Framework (2014) highlights some implications for policy development and implementation. There are no links between policies in the different sectors of the socio-economic aspects of countries and the education sector. This is further compounded by the fragmented approach to developing policy-related budgets of government sectors. Indeed, research shows that the success of gender equality in education strategies is contingent on gender sensitive policies outside the education sector.

Schools have no school specific gender equality policies and goals. This also suggests that gender desks/units within the various Ministries/Departments and provincial education departments do not effectively carry out their mandate of monitoring the enactment of gender equality in schools.

It is evident that there are gaps in addressing diversity markers including an exclusion of the varied manifestations of masculinities and femininities and how these contribute to the broader gender inequalities in education.

Gender inequalities are exacerbated by its inadequate address in school and training colleges. Teachers have been found to be ill equipped to promote gender equality in the classroom. They also lack pedagogical skills in teaching gender issues both within subjects and across fields.

The school's curriculum plays a strong role in the socialisation of learners and do not operate in a vacuum. A positive influence has been the revised National Curriculum Statements through the Life Orientation curriculum, which includes gender sensitive learning outcomes (Draft Background Paper: Women's Empowerment and gender Equality-Twenty year review, 2014). However, Life Orientation will no longer be a compulsory, examinable subject in schools and its current low status and priority will continue to comprise the gender outcomes in the curriculum. The majority of the focus on gender and sexualities has thus been in the Life Orientation curricula, while the treatment of these issues in the national curriculum has been criticised (CGE, 2007). In light of such criticisms, arguments have been made for a comprehensive gender-inclusive curriculum.

Despite their participation in education, women continue to be under-represented at managerial positions in the education system and also in in traditionally male-dominated subject areas. This speaks partly to the issue of cultural barriers, such as negative attitudes to women who wish to pursue unconventional roles and careers.

Persistently high levels of teenage pregnancy and gender based violence present a threat to achievements in gender parity, lead to increased vulnerability of young girls, preventing them from achieving a better quality of life. The paper also argues that despite intermittent work being done on the role of teenage fathers, reflecting society's gendered prejudices on teenage pregnancy being a female problem.

18.3 Recommendations for Higher Education

- More differentiated and flexible approach to planning and allocation of research and development incentives, with situation-specific needs of women and men accounted for.
- Expressed recognition and valuing of racial and gender diversity beyond compliance-driven implementation of employment equity norms.
- Building an institutional culture of respect for gender, diversity, collaboration and scholarship within the school, college and the university at large is necessary for the removal of barriers to research, innovation and scholarship.
- The dropout and throughput rates at FET colleges remain a challenge because learners leave school poorly prepared to enter the FET institution. If the quality of lecturing is also weak, it compounds the challenge of increasing performance. The management of FET colleges needs to be strengthened in order to increase the value for money invested in these institutions.
- The limited geographical spread of learnership and apprenticeship opportunities, concentrated in metropolitan areas, means that the most vulnerable, in particular rural women and girls are disadvantaged.
- The academic staff at most universities remain largely white and male, despite progress since 1994. There is a need to aggressively promote gender equity among all levels of HE institutions and take steps to increase the lecturing staff from other race groups, and to replenish the aging academic staff.

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