

Gender Equality Club Curriculum – Gender and Education, Ethiopia

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Overview:

This curriculum was created off of field work (interviews, observations, filed notes) conducted in Wolaita-Sodo, Ethiopia over the course of four weeks as part of the 2017 Fulbright Hays Ethiopia Curriculum project in combination with secondary sources. This is intended to be used in Gender Clubs throughout the U.S. to educate students on the status of women and girls in Ethiopian educational systems.

Learning Objectives:

For students to gain awareness about the barriers to education facing girls in Ethiopia.
For students to gain a better understanding and appreciation for their education through the examination of the educational history of women in their own community.
For students to be able to relate the educational histories of women and girls in their own culture to the experiences of women and girls in a culture different from their own.

Teacher Preparation: (tools/materials)

Gender and Education, Ethiopia lesson
Gender and Education, Ethiopia Activity Sheet

Instruction:

1. Introduce the lesson by reviewing Gender and Education, Ethiopia lesson.
2. Distribute Gender and Education, Ethiopia—Interview activity sheet.
3. Ask students to identify an older woman who would be able/ willing to be interviewed about her experiences in education.
4. Once an interviewee is secured, help students come up with meaningful questions that will lead to answers that will touch on: common educational barriers in education, overcoming educational barriers, and the relation of these experiences to educational barriers that still exist today.
5. Have students share their list of quotes and their comparative reflections with the class.
6. Using student responses as a guide, discuss with students how they see education in the past, present, and future for U.S. society and Ethiopian society.

Attachments:

Gender and Education, Ethiopia lesson (attachment 1)
Gender and Education, Ethiopia—Interview activity sheet (attachment 2).

Attachment 1: Gender and Work, Ethiopia lesson

A. Gender and Education trends:

- a. The Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) was implemented by the Ethiopian government in 1988, increasing the enrollment of girls in primary schooling (UNGEI, n.d.).
- b. Boys enrollment in primary and secondary schooling outnumbers that of girls (EPDC, 2014).
- c. Female attrition from school is high, especially in the transition from primary to secondary schooling, where majority of girls drop-out prior to secondary schooling (UNESCO, 2012).
- d. The illiteracy rate for girls and women age 15+ is 83% compared to 58% for boys and men (UNESCO, 2012).
- e. Because of the high drop-out rate and the high illiteracy rate among the female population, many women are subject to unpaid or underpaid labor and holding informal jobs (UNWomen, 2013).

B. Barriers to education:

- a. Barriers to education disproportionately affects girls in rural areas.
 - i. “Rural area and urban area are very different. More or less urban area is good according to gender issues, but rural areas the female they are not assumed as people.”
-Ethiopian primary school teacher
- b. Societal attitudes and barriers (UNESCO, 2012).
 - i. Diminished importance of girls’ education as tied to poverty and the expectation of girls’ economic responsibilities to attend to the house and family.
 - ii. Long distances to schools that are unsafe for girls to travel because of risk of gender based violence.
- c. Early-marriage.
 - i. “Before education, early marriage leads to different diseases. When they are children they are not in charge. They do not control their house, their children, and they drop out of classes. [... Early marriage] leads to different kinds of diseases like fistula. It is caused by early marriage.”
-Ethiopian primary school teacher
- d. Female genital mutilation (FGM).
 - i. 73% National prevalence rate, mostly concentrated in rural communities (UNWomen, 2013).
 - ii. Health issues, such as fistula, resulting from FGM.
- e. School environment (UNGEI, n.d.)
 - i. Lack of female teachers.
 - ii. Lack of latrines and clean water.
- f. Access to modus (Geertz, et al., 2016).
 - i. Approximately 80% of women and girls in rural Ethiopia use homemade strategies for menstruation as a result of lack of access to modus (sanitary hygiene products).

- ii. Absenteeism is a result of pain from menstruation, embarrassment, and not having modus to manage their periods.
 - 1. “You know in Ethiopia it is very hard, when the period comes they are not going to school. Especially in rural area this is a big problem. They are not going to school, they are not exercising in any sports.”

-Ethiopian manager at an NGO that focuses on efforts to support girls’ retention in school
- iii. A minority of schools have hygiene management education.
- iv. Social chastising because of menstruation.
 - 1. “Male students they insult them and say, ‘don’t sit with us, don’t come here,’ which discourages them.”

-Ethiopian primary school teacher

C. Initiatives:

- a. Government and United Nations related efforts:
 - i. Ministry of Women’s Affairs.
 - ii. Bureau of Women’s Affairs.
 - iii. United Nations Women.
 - iv. United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative.
 - v. United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
 - vi. United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund.
 - vii. GirlUp.
 - viii. USAID.
- b. NGOS:
 - i. Dignity Period.
 - ii. Tired Community Empowerment Association.
 - iii. Smart Development Works World.
 - iv. CARE Ethiopia.
 - v. Save the Children.
 - vi. Plan International.
 - vii. WRAPSforGirls.
 - viii. “Nowadays, we are trying to distribute these pads to many schools and we really are very happy and grateful, because the children are very happy and we evaluated them and now they are doing very well in school.”

- Ethiopian manager at an NGO that focuses on efforts to support girls’ retention in school
- c. In-School efforts:
 - i. Gender Equality Clubs:
 - 1. Ran by volunteer female teacher who serves as an advocate for female student health and wellbeing.
 - 2. Safe space for girls to go to learn and talk about barriers to their education.
 - 3. Hygiene Management education.
 - 4. A way to obtain resources (such as modus).
 - 5. “To avoid absenteeism, to avoid late comers, we prepare modus in our class. They come without fear. They tell the teacher,

‘something happened to me,’ without fear. Then they wash and change their modus and go back to their classroom.”

-Ethiopian primary school teacher/ Gender Equality Club facilitator

References:

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Attachment 2: Gender and Education, Ethiopia—Interview Activity Sheet

1. Identify an older woman in your family or community who would likely agree to an interview (in-person interviews preferred, but online or over-the-phone interviews also accepted).
2. Keeping in mind what you learned about gender in education in Ethiopia, come up with a list of 5-10 questions for your interviewee and review them with the teacher for approval.
3. Conduct the interview. If your interviewee agrees, record the interview and type out the responses (transcribe).
4. Bring a list of quotes that stood out to you along with a comparative reflection that consists of 5-10 ways your interviewee’s experiences are similar or dissimilar to the educational experiences of women and girls in Ethiopia.
5. Come prepared to discuss what you found with the class.