Committee: Commission on Status of Women

Topic: Women in Education and Employment

Country: Republic of South Africa

“Knowledge is power.” Mostly everyone knows the quote from Francis Bacon; and the most efficient and effect way to absorb knowledge is from education. But for culture, polities and economic reasons, female get less opportunity to be educated, which leads directly to low salary, low work opportunity and other serious issues. South Africa really takes issue of gender equality serious, public protector of South Africa, one of [100 most influential people in the world](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_100) Thuli Madonsela said “If we are going to degrade women, we are degrading ourselves as society. If we let other women be degraded, it’s our loss because degradation creates resentment. A society that harms women harms life at source. (Madonsela tackles gender equality, 2016)”

Other than poverty, one of serious issue in South Africa is inequality. South Africa has been trying very hard working on Gender Parity Index on both work and education and have achieve a good result; in MDG3 (Goals, Targets and Indicators, 2006), we achieve all but two of its full complement of seven indicator marking progress towards realization of gender equality in South Africa, and [Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/gti.htm#goal3) is the most achieved goal among the other 7 MDGs; South Africa raised GER (Gross Enrolment Rate) & Gender Parity Index at Primary School Secondary and Tertiary from 0.97, 1.13 and 0.86 in 1996 to now 0.99:1, 1.03:1 and 1.41 :1; female share of non-agricultural wage employment raised from 43% to 46% (MDG 2015 rev (July 1), 2015). South African Government have policy directives on reducing gender discrimination in education and labour market include legislation on gender equity.

South Africa is always trying to provide solutions toward issues women facing education and employment, we found that we should provide not only provide law, but also programs that will actually improve women’s professional knowledge on a particular area. South Africa have found 4 strategies that covers both long-term, short term solution and strategic and law. First of all, Legislation on equal wage based on gender, or one step back, less wage difference based on gender; as sometime, there may be a big difference, and since we can’t clear it all at once, it would be an option to reduce difference repeating in order to minimize wage different. secondly, we must clearly show that gender discrimination is wrong; to give a strong support, legislation on gender discrimination is the best way as it shows the government’s position on this issue and reduces inequality. Thirdly, ensure every resident remain in education and training on specialties until a certain age; this will make sure girl will get the same amount of education as boy, as the government ordered everyone to be literate, there is less chance to have different literal rate between different gender. Finally, ensure every woman in the labour market, both employed and unemployed have access to either specialty, skill or general training opportunities, so women will be more likely to be employed as they have a skill, they don’t have too much disadvantage toward the opposite sex.

Even though we have a good achievement throughout the last 15 years, there are a lot to improve. South Africa need way more gender-focused government machinery fund and organization resourced and stabilized; with constantly shifting those machinery, there is a lot fragmented and ineffective service for female. We would really need to help and receive help from our neighbors in order to improve equity on education and employment in South Africa.

# References

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