



GENDER DIFFERENTIALS IN EDUCATION IN NORTHEAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES

Farkhanda Warsi

Lecturer

Management Science

National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Hyderabad Campus

Hyderabad - Pakistan

fariwarsi88@gmail.com

Dr. Tarique Bhatti

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology Testing Guidance and Research (PTGR)

Faculty of Education

University of Sindh

Jamshoro – Pakistan

bhatti_tariq2007@yahoo.com

Abstract

The term gender difference means economic and social distribution between men and women. Further gender differences have been seen between men and women in terms of job opportunities, remuneration, high level post, economic participation, education and etc. The objectives of this study will be to: examine gender differentials between male and female in education in context of Northeast and Southeast Asian countries, explore how gender difference prevails in the field of education in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries. This study is qualitative in nature and the data was collected through content analysis method. This study covers the gender differences in three levels of education that is school, college and university levels in the countries of northeast and southeast Asia. The findings shows that gender differences in education in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries exists. Therefore, on the bases of the findings, the recommendations were given.

Keywords: *Gender, Education, Northeast, Southeast, Asia, Countries*

INTRODUCTION

This research paper is done to examine gender differences between male and female in education of Northeast and Southeast Asian Countries. In this research paper the subject is dealing with two key terms: “*Gender Differentials*” and “*Education*”. The term gender difference means economic



and social distribution between men and women. Further gender differences have been seen between men and women in terms of job opportunities, remuneration, high level post, economic participation, education and etc. According to English Encyclopedia (2014), Gender differentials means, social and economic unequal and different distribution between women and men. “*Education*” not merely provides knowledge and competences but also teaches values, training of instincts, promoting right attitude and behaviors says (Hussain, Bhatti, Tufail and Rashid, 2017:5). Additionally, education is not only bookish knowledge, but education also includes different traits like communications, creative thinking, and teamwork, says (The ASEAN, 2021:17).

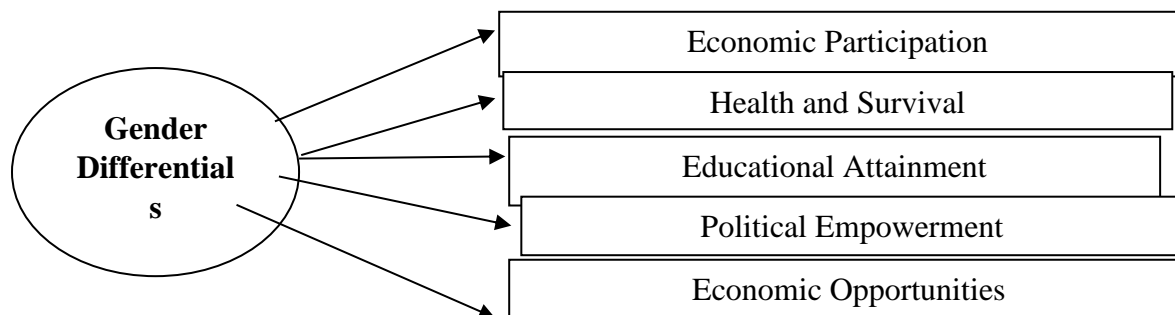
According to (The ASEAN, 2021: 34) Women are still facing challenges such as limited access and benefits in different sectors as compared to men in all around the world. According to the ASEAN Secretariat (2016) report states that as gender difference in education have deteriorated but education attainment for women continues to delay compared of men. Additionally, United Nations Children Fund, (UNICEF) (2019) East and Southeast Asian region children and adolescents are facing high levels of gender differential in terms of household, institutional and societal differences. South Asia is the region where primary school age girls around 24 million are not receiving education, (Education and Gender Equality Series, 2006). In South Asia women and girls continue to face serious challenges in terms of education, health, employment, and nutrition, (Tebaldi, R., and C. Bilo, 2019:10). According to the (The ASEAN, 2021:29) the report states that Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies assistant professor and ASEAN-US Science Prize for Women honourable mention Shefaly Shorey on launching a career in science, “*It is also never too late to make a career change. Learning is lifelong, and the oldest person to join the recent degree in Nursing Studies cohort is 55 years old.*” Additionally, University of Malaya professor and ASEAN-US Science Prize for Women winner Yoke-Fun Chan on changing gender stereotypes says that “*Employers need to understand that women put in 100 per cent at work, and also 100 per cent at home. They don’t scale back*” (p.29). Therefore, this research will explore the gender differences between male and female in education in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study is to examine gender differences between male and female in education in context of Northeast and Southeast Asian countries and to explore how gender difference prevails in the field of education in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to World Economic Forum (2014) the benchmarks for measurement of gender differences includes following five important dimensions of differences between female and male.



FEMALE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN ASIA AND REASONS OF FEMALE LESS LABOUR PARTICIPATION

Wilson (2014) writes that female have limited privileges, and they are deemed second- class resident in Asian countries. In some countries females become head of the states or leaders such as Philippines, India, South Korea, and Thailand, but these came from the elite political families.

Institute for Social Development Studies (2015) the findings show that the hypotheses states that male considered leadership positions within home and outside the home on the contrary side female considered only domestic related matters and this supposition leads towards less labour participation of women.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN AN ORGANIZATION IN KENYA'S

Mwangi (2012) writes that females are confronting obstacle in supervisory positions in an organization (media industry) in Kenya. The study also found that females are not as much of in this field because they are considered more accountable for childcaring and take care of family. Finding shows that total 71.2% were males and only 28.8% were females in supervisory positions such as females were only 1 and 7 were males at leading organization positions, feamles were 7 and males were 12 at mid-level supervision, and females were 13 and males 52 at managerial positions or supervision.

DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATION

Wilson (2014) cites that World Economic Forum's index ranking proved that the East Asian females are less educated than males. Peoples and William (2015) reveals that the deprived place of females in the global economy is that females have a small number of educational opportunities two third of the world's 876 million illiterate person are females.



Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs (MFNCA) (n.d.) in UAE legislation do not depend on the gender. Additionally, the goal of education UAE have almost accomplished, (MFNCA, n.d). According to Gathecha (2016), in Kenya 60% of females are found in the mid and subordinate positions in the field of curriculum and development. Bhutan is the country in all over the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries low in education and during the 1980 to 2001 where girls' enrolment in primary education are high as for boys in enrolment in primary education in South Asia. Bangladesh is the country who made progress in education during 1990-2005, girls' enrollment in secondary school were increased 13 percent to 56 percent., (Education and Gender Equality Series, 2006:2).

According to the, The ASEAN (2021:26) the report states the words of Markoding founder Amanda Simandjuntak on teaching females, *"The demand for qualified ICT workers is high in line with the fast-growing ICT sector, but there is a shortage of qualified workers in Indonesia who are ready to work."* Further co founder Seng Rothsethamony says that we must educate our youth especially in IT sector for their future that *"how to use technology especially in education and business"* (p. 26).

GENDER DIFFERENCES: STATISTICAL OVERVIEW FOR THE ASEAN REGION

The ASEAN (2021) Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, where 58% of females still earn less than their spouses. **Health and well-being** in 2019 only 70% females were able to see a specialist/doctor and more women were experiencing illness than men, **Quality Education** In higher level of schooling ASEAN member states only 4 percent females and 3 percent males have completed no education, **Gender Equality** in ASEAN member states where women are participating in decision making but only 20% women are appointed as a parliament seat and only 24% as a senior and middle level positions in private sectors, **Decent Work and Education** ASEAN member states where young women are more 24 percent in outside of education as compared to men are less only 13 percent outside of education, **Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure** in ASEAN member states where mostly jobs are occupied by males. Females' researchers are 48 percent in ASEAN Member States and only 45 percent of jobs in information services activities are employed by them. Female contribution is essential for innovative expansions to meet females' needs, (The ASEAN, 2021:39).

STATISTICAL REPRESENTATION OF GENDER GAP IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES



Table. 1: Ranking of Northeast & Southeast Asian Countries from WorldEconomic Forum’s Annual Reports on Global Gender Gap

Country	Global Index Rank							
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020	2021
Philippines	5	9	7	7	10	8	16	17
Singapore	58	59	54	55	65	67	54	58
Vietnam	73	76	83	65	69	77	87	87
Thailand	65	61	60	71	75	73	75	80
Indonesia	95	97	92	88	84	85	85	99
China	69	87	91	99	100	103	106	104
Brunei Darussalam	88	98	88	103	102	90	95	111
Malaysia	102	107	111	106	104	101	104	112
Japan	105	104	101	111	114	110	121	119
Cambodia	104	108	109	112	99	93	89	103
Korea, Rep.	111	117	115	116	118	115	108	101

Sources: World Economic Forum 2013-2018, 2020 and 2021

Table : 1, shows that ranking of Northeast & Southeast Asian Countries from World Economic Forum’s Annual Reports on Global Gender, the five important dimensions are Economic Participation, Health and Survival, Educational Attainment, Political Empowerment, Economic Opportunities. World Economic Forum (2021), in Educational Attainment, 95% of this gender gap has been closed globally, with 37 countries already at parity. However, the ‘last mile’ of progress is proceeding slowly. The index estimates that on its current trajectory, it will take another 14.2 years to completely close this gap. Further, East Asia and the Pacific, one of the three most-improved regions, has narrowed its gender gaps, (Economic Participation, and Opportunity, Educational Attainment and Health and Survival) but has regressed on Political Empowerment, (World Economic Forum, 2021:21).



Table.2: RECOGNITION OF FEMALES RIGHT TO VOTE AND TO STAND FOR ELECTION, PER COUNTRY

Countries	Year
Cambodia	1955
Indonesia	1945
Lao PDR	1958
Malaysia	1957
Myanmar	1948 (to Vote) 1946 (to stand for election)*
Philippines	1937
Singapore	1965
Thailand	1932
Vietnam	1946

Source: The ASEAN, 2021

Table.3: FIRST FEMALES IN GOVERNMENT/PARLIAMENT, PER COUNTRY

Countries	Year
Cambodia	1958
Indonesia	1950
Lao PDR	1958
Malaysia	1959
Myanmar	1947
Philippines	1941
Singapore	1963
Thailand	1947
Vietnam	1976

Source: The ASEAN, 2021

Table.4: FIRST FEMALE HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT, PER COUNTRY

Females Name	Countries	Year
Corazon Aquino	Philippine	1986
Megawati Sukamoputri	Indonesia	2001
Yingluck Shinawatra	Thailand	2011
Aung San Suu Kyi	Myanmar	2016
Halimah Binti Yacob	Singapore	2017
Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh	Vietnam	2018

Source: The ASEAN, 2021



Table.5: FIRST SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS

School Name	Countries	Year
Collegio de Santa Potenciana	Philippines	1589
Chinese Girls' School (Renamed St. Margaret's School after WWII)	Singapore	1842
Convent Light Streer (Also called SMK Convent Lebuah Light)	Malaysia	1852
Wattana Wittana Academy	Thailand	1878
Kartini Schools	Indonesia	1907
Nguyen Thj Minh Khai High School (Also called Gia Long School)	Vietnam	1913

Source: The ASEAN, 2021

Table.6: Females Trailblazers in Various Professions

Name	Category	Country	Year
Honorita Acosta-Sison	First Female Doctor	Philippines	1909
Natividad Almeda-Lopez	First Female Lawyer/Barrister	Philippines	1914
Corazon Aquino	First Female President	Philippines	1986
Hnin Mya	First Female Parliamentarian	Myanmar	1932

Source: The ASEAN, 2021

Females are more employed lower in trained and lower income careers in ASEAN than males and it shows gender wages gapes (The ASEAN, 2021:34).

Education and employment

Mongolia, Thailand and Vietnam in three countries boys are less in secondary school completion and they leave education early than girls. But countries like Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines where girls are very limited in School as compared to boys and the reasons are less sanitation facilities. (UNICEF: 2019).

Table.7: IMPROVED SANITATION

Countries	Improved Sanitation Percentage
Indonesia	34%
Cambodia	39%
Philippines	39%
Mongolia	63%
Malaysia	100%

Sources: UNICEF, 2019:80



In East and Southeast Asian countries girls under the age of 20-24 years are married and child marriage is common particularly in Lao PDR.

Table.8: Asian countries girls under the age of 20-24 years are married

Countries	Married Girls Age Before 18 years	Out of 10
Lao PDR	20-24	4 in 10
Cambodia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand	20-24	2 in 10
Indonesia, Magnolia, Timor-Leste, Vietnam	20-24	1 in 10

Sources: UNICEF, 2019

In east and southeast Asian countries, girls are less likely to transition to post-school education, employment or training as compared to boys are high, (UNICEF, 2019: 82).

Table.9: Boys and Girls: Not in post-school education, employment, or training 15-24 Years

Countries	Not in post-school education, employment, or training 15-24 Years	
	Boys	Girls
Philippines	16%	28%
Myanmar	11%	25%
Indonesia	17%	30%
Thailand	10%	20%
Cambodia	10%	15%
Timor-Leste	23%	27%
Mongolia	18%	22%
Lao PDR	4%	6%
Malaysia	2%	3%
Vietnam	0%	1%

Sources: UNICEF, 2019:82

Countries like, Cambodia, Mongolia, Vietnam, Philippines, Lao PDR, Myanmar, where children are engaged in child labour aged 5-17 years both boys and girls (UNICEF, 2019:100).



Table.10: Male and Female Enrolment in Primary and Secondary School

Country/Regions	Primary School Enrolment		Secondary School Enrolment	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
East Asia and the Pacific	96.4	95.3	77.9	81.4
Sri Lanka	98.0	96.3	87.6	90.4
Maldives	99.5	99.5	-----	-----
South Asia	90.2	88.9	60.0	59.5

Source: Tebaldi, R., and C. Bilo, 2019:20

Women and girls are more involved in agriculture work therefore they are low level of education as compared to boys and men in south Asia. Son preference or boys' preference go to school is there (Tebaldi, R., and C. Bilo, 2019: 20). Countries like, Cambodia, Mongolia, Vietnam, Philippines, Lao PDR, Myanmar, where children are engaged in child labour aged 5-17 years both boys and girls (UNICEF, 2019:100).

Countries like Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, completing secondary schooling for girls and boys are vary country to country (Ingram, 2020:14). According to Ingram (2020:35), **Son Bias**, Philippine and Vietnam more son preference countries as compared to Myanmar. **Discriminatory work norms**, women face more challenges Indonesia, Myanmar and Timor-Leste as compared to Cambodia, Philippine and Vietnam, (p. 34). **Women Employment age 25+**, in Lao, Vietnam and Cambodia are high as compared to Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippine and Timor-Leste, Legal **Discrimination**, Myanmar and Indonesia are better than Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. (p.30). **Education**, women education age 25+ in Philippine, Vietnam and Indonesia are better for women's education as compared to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Timor-Leste, (p.30). **Parliamentary representation** by women is high in Timor-Leste, Philippine, Lao and Vietnam and low representation of women in Myanmar, Indonesia and Cambodia. (p. 37). **Gender wage gap**, women earn batter in Philippine as compared to Myanmar. (p.47) **Gender differences assets**, means difference between men and women in property and inheritance rights Philippine and Indonesia are below the average country as compared to Cambodia, Laos, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam, (Ingram, 2020:14-47).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The population of this study consists of twenty-five relevant materials published between 2006 to 2021 in the field of education and studies related with gender differential. This study is qualitative in nature and the data were collected through content analysis method from international reports, UNICEF, ASEAN, research articles, books, or other secondary sources. "Descriptive content analysis is a systematic review that aims to identify and describe the general trends and research results in a particular research discipline" (Çalık and Sözbilir, 2014: 34). Therefore, this study can



be considered descriptive content analysis because it presented understanding on the trends related to the findings on gender differences in education.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The above Literature and statistical overview show that gender differences found in different fields such as job opportunities, remuneration, high level post, economic participation, education and etc. As the purpose of this study to explore gender differential in education in three levels school, colleges and university level in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries, hence, education differences exists in three levels and reasons are vary country to country. According to The ASEAN Secretariat (2016), Gender gaps in education worsened but education accomplishment for females continue to lag those of males. Education achievement, especially higher education and competences training are crucial to females accessing higher paying service opportunities. Education achievement, where females have a tendency to spend less years in school than males, except in Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar, and the Philippines, currently where the gender gap in education accomplishment is zero. In tertiary education the females are higher than males in six out of ten ASEAN Member States – Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Singapore, Viet Nam, Myanmar, and Thailand. (The ASEAN Secretariat, 2016:2).

This is true for girls that gender differential pervasive in east and southeast Asian region that this low rank and differences contribute to poor health, educational, social and economic outcomes. Timor-Leste and Myanmar both have high levels of discrimination on the bases of gender in social institutions, with China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines and Viet Nam having medium levels of discrimination. Further the reports says that in most countries, females are working in different decision-making positions, but they earn less than males. Additionally, females are working across the region as a subordinate than their male counterparts and these impacts on children well-being and development affecting negatively under the age of 18 years especially girls than boys in east and south Asian region. (UNICEF: 2019).

Table: 8 shows that, In East and Southeast Asian countries girls under the age of 20-24 years are married and child marriage is common particularly in Lao PDR, 4 in 10 are married .

Ingram (2020: 6), Southeast Asian despite remarkable progress with the passage of time but women and girls' equality and advancement in certain fields are still low. They are less represented in economic occupation, lower pay, and governmental positions. COVID-19 that set back progress in women's advancement such as 70% of women have seen working in hospitals, clinics, take care elderly people at home and other domestic responsibilities as well. Further, Ingram (2020:8), In southeast Asian countries where woman's earnings increase 11% at the level of primary education, 9 % for secondary, and 17 % for tertiary. Girls are less likely stay in school and work because globally, 12 million girls enter marriage every year before the age of 18, and adolescent girls (age



15-19) years give birth to 7.3 million children annually but countries like Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, early marriage is not an issue for them they all have bellow the score as compared to other countries, (Ingram, 2020: 10) .

The above table: 10, shows that gender differential in education pervasive in all over the world, the above table shows primary school enrolment and secondary school enrolment of male and female. Esat Asia and Pacif region total male enrolment in primary and secondary education are (96.4+ 77.9 = 174.3) and female are (95.3+ 81.4= 176.7). Similarly, in Sri Lanka total male enrolment in primary and secondary education are (98.0+ 87.6 = 185.6) and female are (96.3+ 90.4= 186.7). The table shows that male enrolment in primary and secondary education are high as compared to female in all above mentioned country/ regions. But the report indicates that in south Asia children are out of school and they are engaged in child labour age 7-14 years and secondary level of education only 39.8 % of adult female as compared to 60. 6 % male counterparts, (Tebaldi, R., and C. Bilo, 2019 :20-21). According to the Ingram (2020:23) the following countries like Myanmar, Laos, and Timor-Leste need to improvement or balance between men and women participation in education.

Achieving Gender Equality in And Through Education, (2019: 7) Worldwide, the number of out-of-school individuals both boys and girls of primary and secondary school age almost similar (girls are 131.7 million and boys are 131.3 million) but gender differential reveal differently in different areas. Girls are more likely than boys to be out of school in Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and South Asia. Gender difference dropouts at primary and secondary levels boy's ratio are less as compared to the high dropout rates at primary and secondary levels girls are in many countries. Further, all over the world most of the countries are favors in boys' education as compared to girls, (Achieving Gender Equality in And Through Education, 2019:62).

Pre-Primary school enrolment, in Thailand, where more boys are enrolled than girls (74 percent are boys as compared to 64 percent are girls), (UNICEF, 2019:74).

Table.11: 15-24-year-olds are not in employment, education or training

Boys out of 10	Girls out of 10
1	2

Source: UNICEF, 2019:84

However, post-school pathways for boys are widen as compared with girls: more young females are not in employment, education, or training across the east and southeast Asian region compared with young men, (UNICEF:2019).



CONCLUSION

This study concludes that gender differential between men and women in education in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries exists but the improvement is going on with the passage of time. The findings of this study clearly show that girls or women are less in education due to early marriages, child labour, School sanitation system, domestic work, less opportunities, less preferences being a girl as compared to boys or men. Boys or men have more opportunities, less domestic responsibilities, more son preference as compared to girl or women. Further, findings show that gender differences in education are less found in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries like, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam as compared to South Asian countries which include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Additionally, the finding of this study also illustrates that after the covid-19 this world needs more youth in education especially in IT (Information Technology) field both men and women in all over the world for the betterment of the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following recommendations should be implemented to balance the gender differential between females and males in education in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries. Awareness programs should be conducted for parents, youth, and children, from the side of government, schools, colleges and universities. Electronic media should play a positive role. Child labour and early marriage should stop, protection of Human rights should be from the side of state or non-state actors. Non-state actors should play a positive role. More funding from the side of developed states and non-state actors in Northeast and Southeast Asian countries gender differences between males and females from education can be eradicated.



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