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Ethiopia: Resolving Hunger and Poverty Through Ethiopian Women's Education

Women's education has become a priority throughout United Nations; however, a portion of developing countries have yet to obtain the necessary programs to establish rapid progression in educating the public. In numerous developing countries, sons are viewed as more prosperous, resulting in families repeatedly selecting their sons rather than daughters to attend school, with governments neglecting to provide an ingress to education for females. Ethiopia is a developing country that has reported a shockingly dissimilar ratio of education regarding gender and/or minorities. Concerning the notable recent advancement in educating the public, Ethiopia today has an inflated number of citizens that still have not received educational opportunities available to those who reside in developed countries. Ethiopia currently is ranked 126th out of 127 countries in the development index for the EFA (UNESCO). The country's low ranking is due to the substandard number of youth enrolled in school. Adolescent Ethiopian boys have more perpetual opportunities while adolescent females are often forced to withdraw from those opportunities. This is shown in data reporting the ratio of student gender, as for nearly every 100 boys enrolled in school, there are approximately 77 girls (UNESCO). There is a considerably decent number of young Ethiopian girls enrolled in primary school, but less than 1 in 5 girls are given the chance to enroll in secondary education (RainbowFortheFuture). When factoring in the number of girls who continue their education to the point of earning a degree, the numbers continue to deplete. Ethiopia is fighting an ongoing battle against two major issues, hunger and the betterment of public education. Ethiopian production rates report falling numbers and an evident discrimination based upon gender, therefore Ethiopia desperately requires a solution that is both effective and multi-purpose.

The average Ethiopian family includes three generations (Cultural Atlas). Resources are shared throughout the family, with the sons of the family expected to provide a steady income and support all three generations. Recognition and honor are based on extended family structure (Africa-Expert). The farther the family structure extends will dictate the respect the family is shown by peers. Strong familial bonds are an expectation, with family members relying on one another. Families generate income and resources through traditional labor, with men working an average of 80 hours per week, and women working around 126 hours per week (Abagond). On average, females work an additional 46 hours when compared to men- nearly two additional days. In spite of the far higher hours of labor reported by females, families select sons to progress into a higher education rather than daughters. This is done out of hope for a prosperous outcome, as males trump females in the Ethiopian workforce due to the steady pattern of discrimination based on gender.

In square kilometers, Ethiopia is 1,104,300 sq km, with 1,096,570 sq km of the country being land, and 7,730 sq km of the country being water (CIA). For example, the country's size is smaller than twice the size of Texas. Ethiopian landscapes are marked by an array of lakes, mountains, plateaus, and the country is separated by the Great Rift Valley (World Atlas). Ethiopia is a mostly rural country, with 80% of the population subsiding in rural villages (CIA). Due to the majority of rural villages, the predominance of occupations worked by citizens are agricultural based (FAO).

The Ethiopian economy has a freedom rating index of 53.6, which is ranked as the 137th most free economy, out of 180 countries (Heritage Foundation). As of 2019, the freedom index score increased by

0.8 (Heritage Foundation). Ethiopia has yet to meet average global rankings when compared with average UN's freedom indexes (Heritage Foundation). Ethiopia's per capita is \$783, establishing the nation as one of the most impoverished nations in the African continent.(The World Bank). Yet Ethiopia still has one of the fastest growing economies in Africa, with the per capita and gross domestic product increasing significantly every year, with a recent 10.9% growth. (FDRE). To accommodate the rapid growth and a quickly expanding economy, the government must sponsor an transfer to a less unprejudiced job market, free of gender bias. Ethiopia's production of goods and the government's gross-income require an increase in volume.

Ethiopia remains in an ongoing struggle with economic growth and ending the poverty that has held the nation captive. The government of the nation has been scrutinizing various solutions to increase the necessary quantity of economic growth and the distribution of consignments to Ethiopian citizens in need. For the Ethiopian government to successfully express concern on gender based socio economic issues, there must first be a distinct increase in public awareness in regards to Ethiopian discriminatory actions among and toward the youth, which has heavily impacted the disparity of juvenile girls who do not receive the proper education.

According to statistics following a 2010 to 2011 academic year in Ethiopia, there were over 18 million primary students, 1.8 million secondary students, and a half a million undergraduate students (Asfaw). From primary to undergraduate, the impartiality between genders becomes more clear. If viewed globally, there is an unequivocal pattern of females rather than males attending universities (Asfaw). Contrary to global statistics, Ethiopian universities' ratio of attendance at a university has a wide aperture, with females making up only 27% of the university's population, a fourth of whom will drop out prior to graduation (Asfaw). Women comprise 50% of the Ethiopian population, contributing to about 50% of all production (Western Michigan University). An increase in the production of goods is unachievable with the number uneducated women continuing without an increase. The cause of such asymmetrical proportions in universities' populations is attributable to the economic environment. An encouragement for women to matriculate does exist; however, despite the presence of a slight governmental push, there is no current and effective solution as to how to provide schooling for young women who have no viable access. Whether the cause is financial or gender-based prejudices, women's education in Ethiopia has yet to discern a drastic change. And such a change is a necessary step to increase both the EFA development index and increase stable economic growth.

There are 7.8 million people in Ethiopia who are insecure on food (Relief Web). And the number is predicted to rise even higher. The root causes of food insecurity can be attributed to reduced food production combined with localized conflicts and poor average household income rates (Relief Web, IFPRI). Agricultural production in Ethiopia is certainly not high enough to render even substantial resources for citizens. Some citizens and foreign organizations call for a new agriculture policy, in an attempt to increase production rate.

However, the cheapest and quickest way to develop and drastically escalate the number of Ethiopian women receiving fundamental education, would be based on the government must improving and maximizing the availability of public schools to all rural and urban citizens.

Addressing the situation exclusively through politics may not give general villages the ability to make change, as it may not be the best way to insure effective communication. The government must provide a voice for rural-based citizens to constructively communicate needs, while providing new information to

the government regarding the barricades preventing young girls from attending school. And while the government will require some time to survey and develop the right program for each rural village, in the end, streamlining an effective and eventually beneficial form of direct communication will allow for better schooling system for young girls. This will be an essential way to see into the needs of those who do not have an easy access to education, and then use communication and cooperation to meet a world wide goal.

Both verbal and physical harassment have made a fairly large contribution to the dropout of females. The harassment of female students from male classmates is simply a habitual pattern in Ethiopia, and continually overlooked. Teachers may either choose not to get involved, or, once involved, do not have the power to bring change. There are no strong repercussions to male violence against women, and so perhaps stricter rules need to be implemented, to guide offenders to repent previous offences, helping to support females who may feel pressured or uncomfortable. Still the prevention of violence against women does not stem from the workforce nor school. Women suffer abuse from marital partners within their own households. The support of such victims is key, with the security of education eventually inviting rather than repelling young women. The system will no longer prevent women from attending schools that were previously deemed to represent violent tendencies against female students. Spreading awareness will prevent forms of physical violence against Ethiopian women, which is a serious and widespread issue. In 2016, nearly 1 in 4 Ethiopian women and girls had been victims of physical violence, while 1 in 10 Ethiopian women and girls are victims of rape (Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey 2016), and 65% of women have experienced genital mutilation (USAID). And 59% of Ethiopian women have experienced sexual violence (Rainbow For the Future). School systems in Ethiopia need to educate not only women, but educate adolescent students on the repercussions of any form of abuse. If these methods are scrupulously sustained in all aspects, these practices may eventually lead to safer schools for those who have either suffered abuse or fear violence from male students. Educating both genders on the dangers and injustice of physical and mental abuse may lead to lower rates of domestic violence and a universally stronger support system for female students world wide.

The biggest prevention of women's education is discrimination based upon gender. In Ethiopia, women are falsely considered to be economically unproductive, with a portion of male leaders in Ethiopian families, as well as female relatives, unwilling to provide a way to provide beneficial schooling (Western Michigan University). Many women are unable to go against the decisions of male figures, consequently leading to statistical figures that state that 30% of women do not have the power to make decisions on personal and family issues (Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey 2016). Contrary to the false premises surrounding female productivity, of the 80% of Ethiopian population residing in rural climates, women produce and harvest the majority of agricultural production (USAID). Despite this, women often do not receive credit for the labor, rather the recognition is directed towards male relatives (USAID). The consequences of discrimination based on gender are burdensome, with Ethiopia's possible production rate, as well as the GDP, dramatically suffering. If women were installed into higher levels of the workforce, the production rate would have an appreciable increase. With an increased rate of production, the nation would have greater funding to enroll young girls into school. As the rate of female graduates climbs, the monumental impact on younger girls and women who strive for equality will reach farther across the nation, until every Ethiopian girl has a path to a better future.

Traditional Ethiopian culture plays a large role in the discrimination of women in the workforce. Progress that was made in other, further developed economies has yet to take place in the Ethiopian economy (USAID). Changes brought forth by protests and citizen voices aren't quite as safe in Ethiopia when compared to American standards. While American citizens are guaranteed the rights to freedom of

speech and the freedom to protest, the Ethiopian laws regarding protest aren't as clear. Thus, female citizens often choose not to speak out.

An increase in the production rate will increase acceptance of female leaders within the workforce, a crucial positive change. Hunger in Ethiopia is due to an insufficient distribution of goods. With more innovative minds seeking out ways to generate clean energy, as well as a higher production of food, Ethiopian hunger will decrease dramatically. With increased production, the average individual income will climb, making the availability of resources greatly increase for lower income families. The number of lower income families will decrease, since females who have received a higher education will, on average, earn higher incomes. With female members of families contributing fair paychecks to the family's overall income, the struggle against financial instability will be reduced.

The most effective way to increase awareness and progress is expanding women's involvement in the higher levels of the Ethiopian workforce. However, executing this requires a certain amount of time and funding. While spreading awareness and gaining support for the issue has proven to be viable, finding sufficient funds will entail a new set of difficulties. These difficulties can be relieved using diverse solutions. The Ethiopian government is stable enough to develop a program in which the government funds are used to enlist young girls into youth education programs. Yet this solution does involve some significant complications. While developing a program can be done in a predetermined time frame, finding the funds to create a program may prove to be a challenging task. The current Ethiopian government simply does not have enough funding to develop an effective program.

To solve the matter of insufficient funding, foreign aid is, of course, the most feasible option. Ethiopia has previously been assisted with foreign aid, beginning after the end of World War II (Alemu). The foreign aid was contributory to the restoration of the country's savings and investments, as well as healing various diplomatic relations (Alemu). Foreign aid has proven itself to be both beneficial and an effective solution. The government of Ethiopia will have the ability and support to engineer new ways to bring women into positions of power, therefore restoring the Ethiopian economy's lost equilibrium.

Progress in Ethiopian women's rights is instrumental towards a restructured economy. When the solution has been introduced and implemented into the economy, the lasting effects will bring a historical shift to the gender roles of Ethiopian society. Prejudice against equal rights for women, if addressed properly, will be eradicated. Educating young women will have a ripple effect throughout the country, with Ethiopian girls receiving an education that was not an option before. These young girls will grow up to become young women who will provide for the government, and so forth provide necessary resources for fellow citizens of the country.

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