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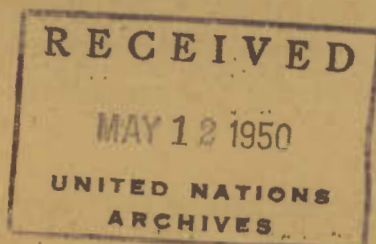
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Fourth session

Item 4 of the agenda

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

1. The Economic and Social Council at its ninth session passed a resolution (242 B (IX)) which inter alia decided that the study of the legal position should be completed by an investigation into the actual conditions in the field of women's education, and suggested that the investigation should aim at ascertaining not only the existence of discrimination but also the causes of such discrimination.
2. The Secretary-General was requested to collaborate with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in planning and carrying out a study along these lines in co-operation with Governments, and to report to the fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.
3. Pursuant to this resolution, UNESCO undertook to prepare the documentation on this subject which the Secretary-General herewith has the honour to present to the Commission.



/EDUCATIONAL
E/CN.6/146

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

A. Sources of the present document

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed equality of rights without distinction of sex and the right of everyone to education to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits (Articles 26 and 27).

The United Nations sent their Member States a questionnaire (E/CN.6/W.1) inter alia concerning opportunities for women to obtain education and practice professions and, in January 1949, published the results of this enquiry in respect of the thirty-two countries which sent replies (document E/CN.6/78, Corr.1 and Add.1).

At its ninth session, the Economic and Social Council recommended a complementary inquiry (resolution 242 B (IX)) to show how far the conditions for women's education were actually realized. This inquiry was to be completed by a study of the nature and causes of the obstacles hindering full equality of educational opportunities for women.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, whose General Conference had considered the question of women's education at each of its annual sessions, offered to collaborate with the Commission on the Status of Women in the following tasks:

- (1) Communication to the Economic and Social Council of the statistics furnished by UNESCO's member States in reply to the Form (Unesco/Educ/67) prepared by the secretariat on educational organization and statistics;
- (2) Study of the obstacles in the way of educational equality between the sexes.

The statistics in the annexed table, derived mainly from official sources and partly from private sources, relate to the years between 1938 and 1947. They give a provisional estimate of the educational situation throughout the world, pending the Secretariat's publication of the whole of the replies by Governments to the questionnaire sent out to the seventy States early in January 1950.^{1/} It has not been possible to secure figures for the comparative school attendance of boys and girls in the USSR.

^{1/} By 1 May 1950, only the Union of South Africa and France had sent replies.

Non-statistical information was supplied by direct consultation with non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations and by the Committee of Experts which met at UNESCO House from 5 to 7 December 1949 to examine the obstacles to equality of educational opportunities. This Committee included representatives of eighteen international non-governmental organizations (women's associations and associations of educators and social workers) as well as representatives of the Inter-American Commission of Women and the Moslem-Arab League. It had instructions to draw up a general report on the basis of the replies received from the participating organizations to a questionnaire framed by the secretariat (Ed/Conf.8/3 and Ed/Conf.8/4).

The purpose of the present document is to present to the fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women the statistics so far collected and the results of consultation with competent international organizations.

B. Statistical comments

1. Fundamental education and illiteracy

From two different data it is possible to estimate the respective position of boys and girls as regards fundamental education. These are:

(a) The percentage of illiteracy among men and women.

There are no later data about illiteracy than those furnished by the national censuses of the different countries. Some of this information goes some way back and calls for certain preliminary observations. It will need correcting as time goes on and we learn the results of literacy campaigns. Secondly, some countries have made education compulsory since the date of their last census, and illiteracy must have been very substantially reduced, particularly among children of school age.

In the light of these remarks, it will be found that, except for Canada, Finland, Sweden and the United States, the percentage of illiterates is everywhere higher among females than among males, whether the law imposes compulsory education or not.

(b) Registrations, divided into sexes, in primary schools in the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Gold Coast, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, India, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, /Peru,

Peru, Poland, Portugal, Salvador, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Percentage of male and female registrations in primary schools
(in relation to the general population, per thousand inhabitants)

A. Countries in which the percentage of male registrations is at least double that of females:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Per 1,000 boys</u>	<u>Per 1,000 girls</u>
Albania	34	17
Algeria	21	7
Gold Coast	39	11
India	27	10
Iraq	23	8
Syria	33	14

B. Countries where the difference in percentage is more than 10 in favour of boys:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Per 1,000 boys</u>	<u>Per 1,000 girls</u>
Ceylon	87	66
Peru	62	38
Portugal	42	31
Singapore	43	25
Turkey	45	26

C. Countries in which the percentage difference in favour of boys is less than 10:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Per 1,000 boys</u>	<u>Per 1,000 girls</u>
Belgium	58	57
Brazil	37	35
Chile	62	57
Colombia	36	35
Dominican Republic	28	27
Ecuador	48	41
Egypt	30	24
Finland	59	56
France	62	53
Guatemala	30	22
Luxembourg	52	49
Netherlands	68	65
New Zealand	58	53
Panama	66	62
Poland	71	67
Switzerland	48	47
United Kingdom	39	37
United States	70	66

/D. Countries in

D. Countries in which the percentage of female registrations exceeds that of males:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Per 1,000 boys</u>	<u>Per 1,000 girls</u>
Canada	82	85
Ireland	63	64
Spain	48	49

The total proportion of male and female registrations in primary schools in the forty-two countries for which there are figures for each sex, differs appreciably from the almost equal ratio of boys and girls of school age, viz, 809 girls to 1,000 boys. It will be noticed that many countries are not mentioned in this study, either because they have not yet furnished figures or because their data do not distinguish between girls and boys.

2. Secondary education

Our information, with mention of the number of boys and girls, relates to the secondary schools of thirty-six countries: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Gold Coast, Greece, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States of America.

Countries in which boy pupils outnumber girl pupils by at least 50 per cent

<u>Country</u>	<u>Proportion of total population per thousand inhabitants</u>	
	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Algeria	1.1	0.5
Argentina	2.6	1.1
Egypt	3	0.5
Gold Coast	0.9	0.1
Greece	8	4
India	6	2
Iraq	4	0.8
Peru	3	1
Singapore	6	1
Spain	0.45	0.22
Syria	3	1
Turkey	2	1

The other countries, although the difference is smaller, have fewer girls than boys in their secondary schools, except Denmark, Finland, New Zealand and Panama, where girl pupils form the majority.

/The total

The total ratio of girls to boys in the secondary schools is 775 to 1,000.

3. Technical studies

The annexed table shows that there is little information about the technical training of girls and boys. The data refer to the following countries:

Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Ceylon, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Netherlands, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America.

It should be mentioned that, although many countries provide technical education for girls, they classify as "technical" schools both those which prepare pupils for a trade or profession outside the family, and those which train only for domestic and household occupations.

Countries in which technical schools are attended by more girls than boys

<u>Country</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Argentina	3.4	5.8
Belgium	0.4	0.6
Colombia	0.8	1.1
Panama	4	7
Peru	0.7	0.7

Countries where the ratio of girls to boys in the technical schools is lowest

India	1	0.1
Iraq	0.3	0.09
Madagascar	0.7	0.1
Spain	4	0.9
Turkey	2	0.5

The total ratio of girls to boys in the technical schools is 508 to 1,000.

4. University studies

The university figures show matriculations for the following countries: Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Iraq, Japan, Lebanon, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America.

The United States universities, which in this table show seven male to five female students, did not maintain this sex ratio in 1948. Owing to the

/return of

return of servicemen to their studies, we find by then 1,712,283 male to 695,966 female students.^{1/} Whether this last figure or the figure for 1945/46 is counted in the general ratio, the total ratio of male to female students shows a considerable change (494 females to 1,000 males according to the figures given in the table, and 343 females to 1,000 males according to the 1948 figures).

Leaving out the United States, where owing to the Second World War the number of students is affected by the variations just mentioned, the ratio of female to male students is 176 to 1,000. Seeing that Canada, France, Finland and the United Kingdom have approximately two male students to every female student, this shows what a very small proportion of women attend universities in most of the countries considered.

It should be added, however, that women university students are on the increase and this increase is more rapid in countries that have organized or reorganized their educational system during the last forty years, whether as the result of a complete change in their political structure or because they have acquired national independence.

Approximate ratio of girls and boys attending
educational establishments of all kinds

(according to estimates given in the annexed table and account being taken of the fact that the figures do not all refer to the same year and that the war and post-war years have affected the ratio):

Primary schools	809 girls per 1,000 boys
Secondary schools	775 " " " "
Technical institutions	506 " " " "
Universities (including the United States of America)	494 " " " "
Universities (excluding the United States of America)	176 " " " "

It should be noted that the information is hardly comparable from country to country because primary, secondary, technical and higher education varies considerably from country to country. Moreover the point here in question is only the proportion of female to male students.

^{1/} Source: U.S. Office of Information, Fall Enrollment in Higher Educational Institutions, 1948.

C. Limitations imposed on women's education in various countries

The information, given in the statistical tables above, on the quantitative aspect of the inequality of educational opportunities for women, is supplemented by information on the scope and causes of such inequality, supplied by the answers of non-governmental associations of women educators and social workers to the questionnaire that was sent out in preparation for the Meeting of Experts. Here a summary of the answers is given, listed by countries that replied.

The questionnaire dealt mainly with the following two points:

1. Where in fact is there educational inequality between men and women (schools, attendance, curriculum)?
2. To what causes can such inequality be attributed?

Argentina

1. Technical schools, other than those training for women's occupations and family duties, are not attended by women.

In the universities, few women attend the faculties of law, medicine and sciences.

2. The tardy admission of women to participation in the political life of the country (1947), and the force of tradition, which outside the home left but a small number of professions open to women (education, business, art), are responsible for these conditions.

Australia

1. The only point on which there is legal inequality is the disability of married women to engage in the teaching profession.

Belgium

1. In technical education, certain special schools do not admit girls, and ordinary technical schools have different curricula for boys and girls.
2. Family life continues to be the main preoccupation of the Belgian woman. The custom of employing men in preference to women is firmly established and influences the studies pursued by women. The overpopulation of the country and the threat of unemployment contribute to the maintenance of this custom.

Brazil

1. The number of women attending universities is limited.

/2. The situation

2. The situation is accounted for by the number of early marriages, which concentrate the activities of the young woman on the home.

Burma

1. After puberty, girls are not admitted to the monastic schools in under-developed regions, and there are no other schools available. There are no boarding facilities for girls.
2. Religious customs, complete economic disorganization due to the war, and the desire to ensure that boys' needs are met first, since they will be called upon to contribute to the support of the family, are responsible for these unfavourable conditions of women's education in Burma.

Canada

1. Catholic theological schools and colleges, and professional mining schools in Ontario are closed to women.
2. The traditions of the Catholic Church and legislation excluding women from work in the mines are the causes of these two restrictions. The social customs of the Province of Quebec give pride of place to women's activities in the home, which accounts for the fact that in this province women avail themselves less of educational facilities than they do elsewhere.

Ceylon

1. In certain communities, few girls go to school and they leave at the age of thirteen. Girls do not take advantage of adult education (evening classes).
2. Overpopulation and poverty result in the education of boys - who later on will have to support a family - being regarded as more important than that of the girls. Owing to the Moslem and Hindu custom of early marriage, studies are soon given up. Local custom, which in practice prohibits girls from going out after dusk, prevents them from attending evening classes.

The budget for women's education is too small and accounts for the shortage of teachers and the complete lack of boarding facilities for girls in rural districts.

Chile

1. Technical schools that admit girls give instruction only in dressmaking, laundering, hairdressing, drawing and housekeeping.

/2. Custom results

2. Custom results in a marked preference being given to preparation for domestic occupations.

Colombia

1. Girls leave secondary schools earlier than boys. The number of State schools for girls is small, particularly in technical education.
2. The prevailing prejudice that in employment men are superior to women means that the latter are given only unimportant jobs that require no training. Tradition restricts the activities of girls and women to the home.

Cuba

1. The curricula of technical colleges for women are restricted to instruction for professions that are followed only by women; other technical schools are attended by only a small number of women.

Denmark

1. No school in Denmark is closed to women.
2. The small number of female students is accounted for by the practical difficulties encountered by married female students and the tendency of parents to give priority to the university education of their sons.

Ecuador

1. Girls have only limited opportunities for technical training.
2. Tradition, which in numerous professions does not favour women, is responsible for the small number of women attending universities. Until recently married women were not allowed to be teachers.

Egypt

1. Military schools, the Mohammedan University "Al Azhar" and other religious colleges do not admit women.

The number of girls attending schools is smaller than that of boys; girls attend for shorter periods; their attendance is less strictly supervised.

2. Tradition, which for a long time kept girls and women at home, and early marriages are in part responsible for the backwardness of women's education.

The general standard of living is low, and fees for secondary schools or universities cannot be met. If there is any money that might be expended on a daughter, it is set aside for her dowry.

/School equipment

School equipment is still inadequate, in particular in girls' schools.

Finland

The only limitation imposed on women's education is in the Mining School, to which they are not admitted, as attendance at the School involves work underground, prohibited for women by law.

France

1. Catholic theological colleges and faculties, military academies, and civil and mining engineering schools are closed to women.

Certain professional schools that in theory are open to women are attended by only very few: agricultural engineering, veterinary and industrial institute.

2. Other limitations, affecting above all professional education, are due to public opinion, and to the difficulties involved in exercising a profession and at the same time keeping house, in a country where amenities in the home leave much to be desired and the principle of women working half-time has not yet been admitted.

Greece

1. Fewer girls than boys attend school and the former finish their schooling earlier.

2. Traditionally the education of boys is regarded as more important, as the part they will be called upon to play in civic and economic life is considered superior to that of women.

The dire poverty found in rural districts accounts for the fact that girls have frequently to help their mothers in the house or in the fields, or are sent at an early age to work as domestic servants in the towns.

Damage caused by the war has considerably worsened the conditions under which girls' schools have to work.

Honduras

1. Theoretically no limitations are imposed on the education of women.

2. The progress of women's education has been slow, for by tradition the home is the woman's sphere.

Hungary

De jure and de facto, educational opportunities for men and women are equal.

/India

India

1. Girls leave school earlier than boys - either a law making school attendance compulsory does not yet exist, or it does not apply equally to the two sexes, or, if school attendance is compulsory, the law is not strictly enforced as far as girls are concerned.

Science and mathematics do not figure on the curricula of girls' schools.

2. Purdah imposes the seclusion of the daughters of orthodox Muslim families. The customary early marriage brings school attendance by girls to a close. There is a prejudice against girls taking up work.

Parents see to the education of their sons, who will have to support a family later on, and set aside for the dowry any money that is available for the daughters.

Family resources are generally insufficient to ensure the education of the daughters and at the same time to provide for all the other members for whom the head of the family is responsible - young children, old men and widows. Means at present available in India preclude the speedy establishment and equipment of schools necessary for ensuring the widespread education of women.

Iraq

1. School attendance is not compulsory and, as yet, the number of girls going to school is very small.

The curricula of boys' and girls' schools differ greatly. In the latter, stress is laid above all on domestic training.

2. The custom of secluding the women still obtains or at any rate influences manners and education.

In the family the need for girls' schools is not felt.

Iceland

1. The only inequality noted is that the number of young men pursuing academic studies exceeds that of young women.

2. The cause of this difference is to be found in the greater facility with which young men are able to find work in the summer which will pay for their studies during the winter.

/Italy

Italy

1. The number of boys attending school is greater than that of girls. There are few vocational schools for girls.
2. The Latin tradition is still strong, the man is the head of the family and has to support it - the woman's foremost duty is to keep house.

Due to overpopulation and disturbed economic conditions, men are liable to be unemployed and the employment of women, even if they are professionally trained, is not encouraged.

Japan

1. Vocational schools for girls are few in number and provide instruction only for specifically feminine occupations. The number of women entering universities is very small and is restricted to those who have attained the requisite level of knowledge.
2. The neglect of women's education is due to the old tradition of sacrificing a woman's life in the interests of the family, to present economic difficulties and to destruction caused by the war.

Luxembourg

Trade schools are reserved for boys; girls' technical schools train nurses and housekeepers.

Netherlands

1. There are two legal restrictions: women are not admitted to the tax inspectors' school and the degree of mining engineer may not be conferred on them. A small number of women attend the universities.
2. The influence of family traditions, the density of the population and the fact that certain careers are closed to married women account for the general conditions of women's education in the Netherlands.

New Zealand

There are no restrictions of educational opportunity for women.

Difference in interests is the only factor determining the choice of professional training.

Norway

Norway

The only distinction is that the time-table for girls is adapted to provide for needlework and housekeeping (compulsory subjects for girls, optional for boys), the time being subtracted from that normally devoted to some other subject, this subject being a different one each year.

Sweden

1. The only educational establishments not open to women are military academies.
2. Although the Government encourages women to work in industry and encourages employers to engage them, the traditional tendency of employing men still persists.

Switzerland

1. Switzerland places no restrictions on the education of girls, but endeavours to provide them with a special type of education, the principal aim of which is the maintenance of family life. The special time-tables for girls include such subjects as practical housekeeping; the time set aside for science is restricted. Courses for young women having left school also aim at developing domestic science.
2. The status of citizen being enjoyed only by men, woman's lack of interest in public life, the high standard of living and the large population are factors that restrict the professional education of women for a specific task.

Turkey

1. Girls leave schools at an early age. Girls' vocational schools dispense training for strictly feminine occupations: dressmaking, fine sewing, dress-designing, hairdressing, child rearing and housekeeping.
2. Religion and the custom of early marriage account for these conditions. Furthermore, young girls help their mothers in the home or, by going to work, make a contribution to the family budget.

United Kingdom

1. Only military colleges do not admit women; a quota of women doctors are admissible to the hospital schools in London.

Education in science is frequently less highly developed in girls' schools than in boys' schools.

/2. What remains

2. What remains of the traditional hostility to women's education is gradually disappearing.

United States of America

1. Some private academic institutions (such as Princeton University) are exclusively reserved for men.

The admission quotas to medical examinations are unfavourable to women. Establishments for instruction in domestic economy (secondary and higher degree) are reserved for girls.

In general, women give up their academic studies sooner than men.

2. Social tradition and economic factors limit the participation of women in higher education. Parents give priority to the education of their sons. Parents and daughters hesitate before deciding in favour of continued study, for marriage remains the girl's principal interest and, with the high standard of living, the house can be kept on only the husband's salary.

From these indications the following conclusions can be drawn as to the extent of de facto inequality between male and female education.

1. Types of schools

(a) A certain number of schools remain officially closed to women: schools preparing for a career in the armed forces on land, on the sea or in the air; police schools (except in so far as training is given for women's posts presenting a purely administrative or social character); theological colleges and institutes (except faculties of Protestant theology); schools and institutes preparing for the profession of magistrate or notary in certain countries that have not yet granted women their full civil, juridical and political rights.

(b) Though legally open to girls, since no restriction has ever been officially pronounced, certain schools are attended by girls only as an exception, owing to the persistence of tradition: schools preparing for a career in the mines, or for active employment in transport by sea, road or rail, or in forest administration etc.

(c) Technical schools open to women or reserved for women are not numerous; in general they prepare girls for occupations that are regarded as being particularly suitable to the feminine temperament.

2. General curricula for girls

Though schools dispensing a general education at the primary and secondary levels are open to girls in nearly all the countries that have been considered, it must be pointed out that, in countries where co-education is not the rule, the curricula and time-tables are not always the same for boys and girls.

The following points are to be noted:

- (a) Restricted science curriculum for girls.
- (b) Additional subjects for girls: needlework, housekeeping, child-rearing.
- (c) A reduced number of hours for science classes, the time saved being allotted to subjects that are assumed to be specifically feminine.

3. Examinations

In countries where girls are given quite a different education from boys, different examinations are set, the examinations for girls being generally of smaller scope. Yet even in countries that have adopted the principle of educational equality, it sometimes still happens that candidates are marked differently according to whether they are boys or girls.

Such differences, however, are disappearing - there is a strong tendency to combine examinations for boys and girls, and to assess candidates from the sole point of view of intellectual merit.

4. School attendance

It is smaller in the case of girls as they drop their education earlier and interrupt their education more frequently.

D. Study of obstacles to equality of educational opportunities for women

Before putting to use the variety of information here outlined, the Committee of Experts convened by UNESCO had one preliminary observation to make: if women do not possess the same educational facilities as men, it is not for any psychological or pedagogic reason that could justify the existing qualitative and quantitative difference between the opportunities offered to boys and to girls.

The only established differences in intellectual aptitudes are differences between individuals and not differences as between the sexes.

The factors that have delayed or prevented the educational advancement of women, already referred to in the replies to the questionnaire preceding the

meeting of experts, were methodically listed, after discussion, in the final report of the Committee, whose main conclusions are here recapitulated.

1. Social factors

Persistence of the traditional view of the respective social roles of man and woman.

This view has assigned to men a sphere of activity outside the family circle, while attributing to women the whole responsibility for the home.

In spite of substantial changes in living conditions, which for the most part no longer call for exclusive care of the home, the constant protection of children against physical dangers or the production of all consumption goods inside the home, it is still held that education should enable a boy to perform his part as citizen and productive member of society, while giving girls only such knowledge as is necessary for the material and moral management of the family.

For many centuries this essential knowledge was taught practically by the mother to her daughters. The need for developing a woman's intellectual gifts appeared, with very few exceptions, much later, and in no society has it prevailed altogether over the original conception of female education.

Persistence of the idea that marriage, as the primary purpose of a woman's life, brings her education to an end.

A woman's education is supposed to end with marriage and motherhood. Both impose upon her definite duties and in most cases interrupt all intellectual study. Since marriage usually occurs between the ages of 14 and 25, according to the country or community, it marks the end of a girl's schooling. For boys, on the other hand, it carries the obligation of more intensive professional training for the responsibilities of maintaining a family.

Belief that continued intellectual development is an obstacle to the natural goal of marriage.

In a modern society, in which women are offered comparatively large educational possibilities, parents do not want their daughters to continue their studies beyond the elementary stage, lest a girl's interest in these studies and the concentration they call for should distract her attention from her main purpose, which is marriage. Any attempt to attain a degree of knowledge which does not exclusively serve the needs of the home is considered a dangerous idiosyncrasy. It invites ridicule and censure, arouses suspicion and may ruin a young girl's normal hope of founding a family.

/In this way

In this way tradition tends to limit girls' education.

Persistence of habits of life based upon the idea of protecting women.

(a) The idea of the physical weakness of women is still at the root of certain restrictions upon equality of educational opportunities for the two sexes. Study is thought to be more tiring for girls than for boys, and it is considered that the former should have a lighter syllabus. Hence, of course, a difficulty in obtaining access to higher studies common to men and women. This is a problem linked with access to the professions, where the same arguments are often used.

(b) Another result of this notion of feminine frailty is that which, in an age when physical safety in peace time is practically assured, fosters the fear of allowing girls to attend schools situated far away from their homes.

(c) In some parts of the world, it is still the custom to seclude girls and, even where these habits have officially disappeared, tradition in Eastern countries has failed to keep pace with changes in the law.

These conceptions of the personality and role of women explain the partial or total resistance to efforts made to enable everyone without distinction of sex to develop their potential gifts by education. The results of this resistance have been:

- (i) Legislation has been mainly concerned with the education of boys;
- (ii) The establishment of girls' schools has lagged behind;
- (iii) There is less close supervision over girls' attendance at school;
- (iv) Schools and syllabuses are directed towards different aims;
- (v) Resistance by the legislator and by public opinion to the abandonment of these traditional and almost universal views of the social role of man and woman, even when such views have no longer any foundation in contemporary social facts;
- (vi) Acceptance of these views by most women, an acceptance which prevents them from making the most of the educational facilities now offered them.

All these social conceptions and practices are factors from which it is exceedingly difficult to escape and which weigh upon both sexes even when the laws have granted women civil equality, the vote and theoretically equal educational opportunities.

2. Economic factors

If economic conditions in the different countries have helped to restrict the educational opportunities of women, it is because they are strongly influenced

/by the social

by the social factors mentioned above.

Financial considerations lead families to subordinate the education of girls to other requirements:

- (a) A young girl of school age is used to help or replace her mother at home;
- (b) Girls' schooling is prematurely suspended - without regard for their intellectual gifts - for the sake of the education and professional training of boys;
- (c) A young girl is taken away from school and put into shop or factory where her wages help in industrialized countries to swell the family income;
- (d) Girls help in producing consumer goods in non-industrialized countries;
- (e) The family resources available for girls are used to build up her dowry or trousseau instead of for educational purposes.

The economic conditions of the country, if these are bad, also react unfavourably upon female education:

- (a) Governments influenced by tradition tend to see in women's education (especially professional training) an unprofitable investment, since a woman who is trained for a profession nearly always leaves it on getting married;
- (b) Employers, who prefer male labour because it is supposed to be more stable and regular than female labour, do not give to qualified women the posts to which they are entitled and thus discourage women's ambition to enter the professions and their training for them;
- (c) Public opinion in thickly-populated countries, where jobs are keenly competed for, resents the competition of qualified women and, a priori, any new development in professional female education.

Thus, for the same reasons, both families and Governments are primarily concerned to develop in boys all those qualities which will allow them to work for the economic enrichment of the family and the country. They first improve the conditions of boys' education and are slow to establish the same conditions for girls.

3. Obstacles due to the organization of family life

While long-standing tradition, and economic factors working concurrently with them, react upon the conditions governing women's access to education by limiting their period of schooling, it is also certain that the organization of family life, for which in all communities the woman is responsible, constitutes an obstacle to the educational progress of adult women.

(a) Material obstacles

The domestic work of women has to provide all the family with the necessary conditions of feeding, lodging and clothing, and all this, as a rule, takes a lot of time. In economically less developed societies, it is the woman's industry which creates these conditions and, however elementary they may be, they do not leave time over for other occupations, especially for cultivation of the mind.

In more developed societies, the requirements of civilization have created fresh needs as production of consumer-goods outside the family has released women from some of their duties. These have been replaced by fresh burdens.

The idea of rationalizing domestic work is of very recent date and has only progressed to the extent that paid work for women outside the home is permitted.

This rationalization itself encounters resistance, even from women, who still cling to their unique housekeeping function.

Costly labour-saving devices remain available for the well-to-do, and in most countries no serious effort has been made to organize domestic work on a communal basis.

(b) Obstacles due to lack of collective social services

Accidental complications in family life may compel women to meet new emergencies; care of the sick and of aged parents prevents them from performing other duties.

This is rightly regarded as one of the main reasons for absenteeism among women in all occupations. They have to sacrifice their professional duty to family obligations. These almost unpredictable obligations also underlie the intellectual apathy of women in all matters that do not affect the family circle. This apathy, like professional absenteeism, has its roots in the lack of collective social services and in the survival of the view of the family as a homogeneous and self-sufficient social unit.

(c) Psychological and social obstacles

Without question, every society rests upon the work of the housewife, and no educational system can contemplate either any change in the natural laws and complementary biological functions of the sexes or the destruction of the natural family fabric.

Nevertheless, two new conceptions of the role of women are becoming more and more important in the modern world: the idea of the individual's inviolable right to choose the education and work by which his potential gifts will best develop, /and the idea

and the idea of the importance of women as productive elements in society.

Caught between tradition and the new course of things, women is not yet able to grasp the full implications of the problem, lacking the precise information to be supplied by psychologists, sociologists and educators.

There is an absence of scientifically proven data as to the length of time for which the mother should exercise direct and continuous influence over the child if it is not to suffer either physical neglect or a feeling of frustration that may have an injurious effect upon its behaviour and moral growth.

Trustworthy information on these essential matters would be of the very greatest service to women and, by releasing mothers from the dilemma of choosing between the family and the profession, would encourage girls to aspire to both study and wedlock.

Nor has any serious attempt been made to diffuse the idea that the responsibilities of the home rest, not upon one person, but upon all its adult members, and neither teaching in the home nor teaching at school has as yet tried to train children and adults alike for these responsibilities.

Lastly, the complete separation between the school and the family, which has led to an exaggeration of the school's importance to males and of the importance of the home to females, is an educational formula which, arbitrary though it is, still obtains, and it competes with the more balanced conception of a full education that aims at developing every individual gift and at abolishing barriers between the school and the family.

Such are the obstacles which appear most often to oppose women's educational opportunities in the majority of countries.

The study of these obstacles needs to be pursued with care and precision, for we are dealing with fundamental problems in human life, with very long-standing traditions as well as with practical difficulties.

Systematic study should be devoted to the obstacles which hamper certain countries where tradition and slow economic development make women's educational opportunities fewer than in countries where much has been done gradually to reduce inequality between the sexes.

Finally, this quest for information should be supplemented by recommendations and methods which will help women, the general public and Governments to establish a trend of opinion and legislation in favour of equal educational opportunities for men and women.
