

Unlocking Education Rights: A Path Forward for South Sudan

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of conflict on access to education in South Sudan, utilising mixed methods to provide a comprehensive analysis. Key findings reveal significant challenges, including insufficient funding for the national Ministry of Education and pronounced inequalities affecting marginalised groups such as girls, children with disabilities, and children from cattle-keeping communities. The research highlights disparities in resource distribution between urban and rural schools, exacerbated by tribal violence. The involvement of local communities, stakeholders, and international agencies is crucial for providing funding and technical support. This study emphasizes the need for policy reform, particularly in areas related to inclusivity and equity. The targeted population includes students in general education, covering both primary and secondary education. Practical implications suggest that improving regional security and increasing international assistance are vital steps towards ensuring equitable access to education for all students in South Sudan.

Keywords: Conflict, education access, South Sudan, Mixed Methods, marginalised groups, inclusivity, equity, tribal violence, Policy Reform, Community Involvement, and International Support.

INTRODUCTION

Equitable access to education remains a significant challenge in South Sudan, a country ravaged by years of conflict and instability. Despite international commitments to education for all, disparities persist, particularly affecting marginalised groups such as girls, children with disabilities, and children from cattle-keeping communities (UNESCO, 2021). The main educational barriers include inadequate funding, scarcity of trained teachers, and insufficient school infrastructure (World Bank, 2020).

Cultural attitudes toward education, particularly for girls, further exacerbate these disparities. Early marriage and child labour act as significant barriers to educational attainment, hindering progress towards gender equity in education (Save the Children, 2021). In rural areas, the presence of armed conflicts and displacement of communities further disrupt access to education, creating a volatile environment for learning (UNICEF, 2019).

Adopting a multifaceted approach involving local communities, educators, and international organisations is essential to address these challenges. Equitable and inclusive education policies and the right to learn can assist communities in accepting and supporting the education system. For example, in Malawi, the involvement of communities has proven effective in

reforming government policies (UNICEF, 2018). This approach should focus on reforming policies to promote inclusivity and equity, ensuring that resources are distributed fairly between urban and rural schools, and improving regional security (Save the Children, 2021). By fostering collaboration and leveraging international support, South Sudan can make significant strides towards providing equitable access to education for all its children.

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

Access to education in South Sudan faces numerous challenges deeply rooted in the country's history of conflict, economic hardship, and social issues. Decades of civil war have severely disrupted educational progress. Many schools have been destroyed or damaged, and widespread displacement has created a fragmented learning environment. As of 2017, 72% of primary school-aged children in South Sudan do not attend school (UNICEF South Sudan, 2017). South Sudan remains one of the least developed nations globally, with limited financial resources allocated to the education sector. This results in inadequate teacher pay, high attrition rates, and a shortage of qualified personnel. Additionally, many families rely on agricultural work, often taking precedence over formal education (Generis Online, 2022). Cultural attitudes toward education, particularly for girls, can impede access to schooling. Early marriage and gender-based violence often prevent young girls from pursuing their education. Poverty, child marriage, and cultural and religious views all hinder girls' education (The Borgen Project, 2020). Many schools lack essential resources such as textbooks, trained teachers, and adequate infrastructure. Over one-third of schools in South Sudan are not functional due to damage from ongoing conflicts (UNICEF South Sudan, 2017). To reduce the long-term cost of education, South Sudan has implemented an alternative education system that condenses an eight-year curriculum into a four-year program. However, this system excludes many qualified teachers trained to teach in Arabic, compromising the quality of education (Generis Online, 2022).

Impact of Conflict on Education

The impact of conflict on education in South Sudan is profound and multifaceted. Many schools have been destroyed or severely damaged due to ongoing disputes, significantly reducing the number of functional educational facilities (UNESCO, 2021). The conflict has led to the displacement of millions of people, including children and teachers. Displaced families often prioritise immediate survival needs over education, leading to high dropout rates and interrupted learning (UNESCO MGIEP, 2021). The violence and instability associated with conflict can have long-lasting psychological effects on children. Trauma can hinder their ability to concentrate, learn, and perform well academically (Institute of Development Studies, 2021). Many teachers have fled conflict zones or have been killed, leading to a shortage of qualified educators. This exacerbates the already strained education system, as remaining teachers are often overwhelmed by large class sizes and lack of resources (UNESCO, 2021). Conflict diverts national resources away from education to military and emergency needs. This results in reduced funding for schools, teacher salaries, and educational materials, further compromising the quality of education (Institute of Development Studies, 2021). Conflict often exacerbates existing gender disparities in education. Girls are particularly vulnerable to being pulled out of school to help with household chores or to be married off early, further limiting their educational opportunities (UNESCO MGIEP, 2021).

Psychological Effects on Children

The psychological effects of conflict on children in South Sudan are severe and long-lasting. Many children who have witnessed or experienced violence suffer from PTSD. Symptoms include flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, and uncontrollable thoughts about the traumatic events (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). The constant exposure to violence and instability can lead to chronic depression and anxiety. Children may feel hopeless and fearful and have difficulty finding joy in activities they once enjoyed (PsyncARTICLES, 2024). Children affected by conflict often exhibit aggressive behaviour, withdrawal, and difficulty in forming healthy relationships. These behavioural issues can stem from the trauma and stress they have experienced (European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2024). The stress and trauma associated with conflict can impair cognitive development. Children may have trouble concentrating, learning, and performing well academically (Current Psychiatry Reports, 2015). Displacement and the breakdown of community structures can lead to social isolation. Children may lose their support networks, including friends and family, which can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and abandonment (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). In some cases, children may turn to substance abuse as a coping mechanism to deal with the trauma and stress of conflict (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020).

Interventions for Children Affected by Conflict

Intervention for children affected by conflict must be comprehensive and multifaceted to address their challenges. Providing mental health services and psychosocial support is crucial. This includes counselling, therapy, and community-based interventions to help children cope with trauma and stress. To be effective, programs should be tailored to the local context and culture (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). Ensuring access to education is vital for children's development and well-being. This includes rebuilding schools, providing learning materials, and training teachers. Education programs should incorporate psychosocial support and life skills training (UNICEF South Sudan, 2017). Establishing child protection mechanisms to prevent and respond to abuse, exploitation, and violence is essential. This includes setting up safe spaces for children, providing legal assistance, and ensuring the presence of trained child protection officers (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). Strengthening family and community support systems can help create a stable environment for children. This includes providing economic support to families, promoting positive parenting practices, and fostering community cohesion (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). Access to healthcare is critical for children affected by conflict. This includes vaccinations, nutrition programs, and medical care for physical and mental health issues (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). Reintegration programs are essential for children who have been involved in armed groups. These programs should provide education, vocational training, and psychosocial support to help children reintegrate into their communities (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). Advocating for policies that protect children's rights and ensure their access to essential services is crucial. This includes working with governments, NGOs, and international organisations to create and implement child-friendly policies (UNICEF South Sudan, 2020). Interventions that address these challenges help create a safer, more stable, and supportive environment for children affected by conflict, promoting their overall well-being and development.

Examples of Successful Interventions

Child-friendly spaces (CFS) are safe spaces in conflict zones where children can play, learn, and receive psychosocial support. They provide a sense of normalcy and routine, which is crucial

for children's mental health. For example, UNICEF has established numerous CFS in South Sudan, providing essential services to thousands of children (UNICEF South Sudan, 2017). Integrating mental health services into schools can help children cope with trauma. In Lebanon, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) implemented a program that trained teachers to provide psychosocial support and created safe learning environments for Syrian refugee children (IRC Lebanon, 2022). The community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) approach involves the community in rehabilitation, ensuring that interventions are culturally appropriate and sustainable. In Uganda, War Child Holland has successfully used CBR to support children affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) conflict (War Child Holland, 2019). Mobile education units can educate children in areas where schools have been destroyed or inaccessible. In Afghanistan, Save the Children has used mobile units to reach children in remote and conflict-affected areas, ensuring they continue their education despite the challenges (Save the Children Afghanistan, 2020). Reintegration Programs for Former Child Soldiers, programs that provide education, vocational training, and psychosocial support to former child soldiers, are crucial for their reintegration into society. The UNICEF-supported Community Education Investment Program (CEIP) in Sierra Leone has helped thousands of former child soldiers rebuild their lives (UNICEF Sierra Leone, 2018).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study involve:

- To examine the current state of education in South Sudan and its alignment with social justice principles.
- To identify key barriers to achieving equitable education, such as cultural, economic, and structural factors.
- To analyse the role of community, educators, and policymakers in fostering inclusion and equity.
- To recommend context-specific strategies for promoting social justice through education in South Sudan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Quantitative Methods

A cross-sectional survey design was used to quantify educational disparities. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure representation from different socioeconomic backgrounds (Fowler, 2014). A standardised questionnaire (survey) was administered to 50 students and 50 teachers (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and logistic regression to identify significant disparities (Field, 2013).

Qualitative Methods

The study's design utilised a phenomenological approach to understanding the lived experiences of teachers and students in South Sudan. A purposive sampling method was employed to select 30 teachers and 30 students from various regions (Creswell, 2013). When collecting data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant to gather detailed narratives (Seidman, 2006). Two focus groups were held with teachers and one with students to facilitate broader discussions (Krueger & Casey, 2014). Thematic analysis was conducted to identify common themes across the interviews and focus groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Mixed Methods

An explanatory sequential design was used, starting with quantitative data collection and analysis and followed by qualitative data collection to explain the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Initial surveys were conducted for data collection, as described in the quantitative methods section. To gain deeper insights into the findings, follow-up interviews were conducted with a subset of survey participants. When analysing data, the quantitative and qualitative data were integrated during the interpretation phase to comprehensively understand educational disparities (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

They combine critical pedagogy, social justice theory, capabilities approach, mindfulness, and well-being. Paulo Freire's concept of critical pedagogy emphasises education as a tool for empowerment and liberation. Freire's notion of *conscientisation*, or critical awareness, asserts that education should enable learners to recognise and challenge societal inequities. Freire's work in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) critiques traditional banking models of education, advocating instead for a dialogic approach that fosters mutual learning between educators and students. Nancy Fraser's tripartite framework—redistribution, recognition, and representation—provides a robust lens for examining educational equity. It underscores the complexity of the issues at hand, as redistribution addresses the fair allocation of resources, recognition emphasises valuing diverse identities, and representation ensures inclusive participation in decision-making processes. This framework highlights the intricate interconnectedness of education's economic, cultural, and political justice dimensions. Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum's capabilities focus on expanding individuals' freedoms to achieve their potential. In education, this framework underscores the importance of access, quality, and meaningful opportunities that enable learners to thrive. It emphasises addressing structural barriers and fostering environments where all students can develop their capabilities.

In conclusion, academic literature underscores the transformative potential of education in advancing social justice. By addressing structural inequalities, fostering culturally relevant practices, and leveraging technology, education can become a powerful tool for equity and inclusion. This review provides a foundation for examining how education systems can be reimaged to serve marginalised communities better and promote societal transformation.

Literature Review

This literature review explores the intersection of education and social justice, investigating the theoretical foundations, challenges, and practices that shape equitable educational systems. It confronts the structural and systemic barriers perpetuating inequality and identifies strategies to foster inclusion and fairness in education. By synthesising existing research, this review provides a foundation for understanding the immense potential of education as a vehicle for inspiring social transformation.

Research on Education Disparities, Social Justice, and Strategies for Promoting Social Justice in South Sudan Education by UNESCO: Education disparities in South Sudan have been highlighted as a critical issue hindering progress towards achieving social justice in the country. Factors such as poverty, conflict, and lack of infrastructure contribute to many children in South Sudan lacking access to quality education (UNESCO, 2019). This results in a significant disparity in

education access between different regions and socioeconomic groups, with children in rural areas and from low-income families being particularly disadvantaged (UNESCO, 2017). This disparity perpetuates the cycle of poverty and inequality in the country.

In response to these challenges, UNESCO is crucial in addressing education disparities and promoting social justice in South Sudan's education system. UNESCO focuses on several key strategies to promote social justice in education within the country (UNESCO, 2020):

- **Providing Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education:** UNESCO ensures that all children, regardless of background, have access to quality education in South Sudan. This includes addressing barriers such as gender inequality, poverty, and disability.
- **Teacher Training and Support:** UNESCO supports initiatives to train and support teachers in South Sudan, particularly in remote and conflict-affected areas. By enhancing the quality of teaching, students are more likely to receive a high-quality education.
- **Promoting Cultural Diversity and Inclusion:** UNESCO advocates for cultural diversity in education curricula, ensuring that all students see themselves and their cultures represented in the classroom.
- **Advocating for Policy Changes:** UNESCO collaborates with the government of South Sudan to advocate for policy changes that promote social justice in education. This includes efforts to increase funding for education and implement inclusive education policies.

Through implementing these strategies and close collaboration with the government and local communities, UNESCO aims to reduce education disparities in South Sudan and promote social justice in education for all children. However, there are inconsistencies in giving school-leaver students scholarships to study abroad, which are not mentioned in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION BASED ON FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

Barriers to Access Education in South Sudan

South Sudan faces numerous barriers to access to education, which can be broadly categorised into sociocultural, economic, and infrastructural challenges, and conflict and stability. Sociocultural barriers involve gender disparities, including cultural norms and practices, which often prioritise boys' education over girls. Girls are frequently married off at a young age, which limits their educational opportunities. Child marriage combines high rates of child marriage, which hinder girls' education, as they are often expected to prioritise household responsibilities over schooling. Economic barriers, such as poverty and opportunity costs, can be explained by many families unable to afford school fees, uniforms, and other educational materials. This economic strain forces children to drop out of school to support their families. Families often rely on children to contribute to household income, making education a less viable option. Infrastructural barriers include a significant shortage of schools, especially in rural areas. This forces children to travel long distances, which can be dangerous and discouraging. Many schools also lack basic amenities such as clean water, sanitation, and adequate classrooms, creating an unsafe and unproductive learning environment. Conflict and Instability include ongoing conflict. The civil war and ongoing conflicts have led to the destruction of schools and displacement of communities, further disrupting education. Safety concerns are an issue. The instability in the region poses significant safety risks for children travelling to and attending school.

Effectiveness of Current Policies and Initiatives in Improving Access to Education in South Sudan

The effectiveness of current policies and initiatives in improving access to education in South Sudan can be evaluated through various lenses, including community participation, gender-focused strategies, and overall educational quality improvements. One significant initiative has been promoting community participation in education. This approach has involved engaging parents, teachers, women, youth, and other community members in developing and implementing school improvement plans. These plans have been informed by community participation in visioning exercises and data interpretation on access, quality, and safety measures. Despite challenges posed by violent conflicts, many school communities have reported progress in implementing aspects of their school development plans, drawing on resources from grants, the community, the government, and other projects. Efforts to improve girls' education have shown promising results. Since South Sudan's independence in 2011, the government has increased the education budget and implemented policies aligned with international frameworks such as the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal. These strategies have led to a significant increase in female enrolment, rising from 21% in 2005 to 49% in 2021. However, challenges remain, with millions of children still out of school and the quality of learning persistently low, particularly affecting female students. The Improving Access and Quality of Basic Education (IAQBE) initiative, supported by the African Development Bank, aims to enhance access and quality of basic education in South Sudan. This initiative focuses on infrastructure development, teacher training, and the provision of learning materials. While the initiative has faced implementation challenges due to the conflict-affected context, it has contributed to improved educational access and quality.

In summary, while current policies and initiatives in South Sudan have improved access to education, significant challenges remain. Community participation and gender-focused strategies have shown effectiveness, but ongoing conflicts and resource limitations hinder progress. Continued efforts and support are essential to sustain and build on these improvements.

Table 1: Some estimated contributions from key donors to education in South Sudan

	Estimated Contribution (USD)	Programs
United Kingdom	\$20 million	Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS)
Canada	\$10 million	Joint GESS funding
European Union	\$15 million	GESS and school enrollment programs
United States	\$ 12 million	Education initiatives within GESS
UNICEF	\$ 8 million	Classroom construction, teacher training

According to the Girls' Education South Sudan initiative, the South Sudan Global Partnership for Education, and UNICEF reports on education budgets, an estimated \$65 million, combined with 6% of the national education budget, could significantly enhance the country's education system if effectively managed. This funding could support girls' education, the construction of classrooms and other facilities, and teacher training programs. Equal access to education for both girls and boys is essential to fostering long-term development in South Sudan. Schools could operate more efficiently and inclusively with adequate teacher training and resources.

However, the persistent security challenges and ongoing violence in South Sudan continue to destabilise communities, posing substantial obstacles to the progress of the education system. Addressing these issues is crucial for ensuring a stable and thriving educational environment.

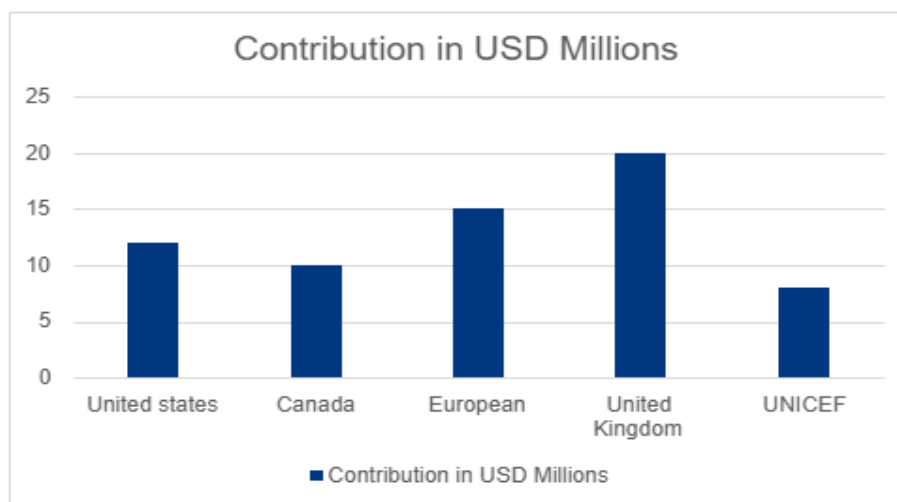


Figure 1: Illustrating Estimated Contributions for Table 1

The Impact of Education Access on The Socio-Economic Status of Individuals and Communities in South Sudan

Education access plays a crucial role in shaping the socio-economic status of individuals and communities in South Sudan. Education significantly enhances individuals' economic well-being. Educated individuals are more likely to earn higher incomes and secure better employment opportunities. This is particularly evident in Central Equatoria State, where access to quality education has been linked to improved economic status (UNESCO, 2020). Education is a powerful tool for poverty reduction. Higher levels of education are associated with increased individual earnings, which in turn contribute to the overall economic development of communities. The correlation between education attainment and economic success is well-documented (World Bank, 2021).

South Sudan faces numerous challenges in establishing a stable and effective educational framework. Decades of conflict, economic hardship, and social challenges have severely disrupted educational progress. Many schools lack essential resources, trained teachers, and adequate infrastructure (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The government of South Sudan is urged to review and update educational policies to focus on education quality. Improving the relevance of the education system is essential for sustainable development and socio-economic security (UNESCO, 2020).

Cultural attitudes toward education, particularly for girls, can impede access to schooling. Early marriage and gender-based violence often prevent young girls from pursuing their education. Addressing these social barriers is crucial for improving education access and outcomes (Girls' Education South Sudan, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unforeseen impact on the education sector in South Sudan. The pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges and created new obstacles for students and educators (UNICEF, 2020).

Table 2: The distribution of educational resources in South Sudan with citations

Region	Number of Schools	Number of Teachers	Student Enrolment	Pupil/Teacher Ratio	School Infrastructure Quality
Jonglei	1,200	3,500	150,000	43:1	Poor
Upper Nile	900	2,800	120,000	43:1	Poor
Unity	800	2,500	100,000	40:1	Poor
Western Bahr Al Gazal	700	2,200	90,000	41:1	Fair
Warrap	1,000	3,000	130,000	43:1	Poor

This table utilises data from the National Education Census Summary Report 2023, compiled by the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, and the Education Sector Analysis report by UNESCO. The data highlights significant disparities in resource distribution across regions, except Western Bahr el Ghazal, where resources appear to be allocated more equitably. These findings align with qualitative information gathered from participants in Jonglei State, Upper Nile, and Bahr el Ghazal, as demonstrated in the tables below.

Table 3: Participants

Category	State	Count
Student Interviews		50
Stakeholder Interviews		5
Teachers	Jonglei State	50
	Upper Nile	2
	Bahr Al Gazal	1

Table 4: Showing distribution of educational resources in Jonglei State- Year 2024/2025

School	Number of students enrolled		Number of dropout students		Sanitation facilities		Resources		
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Toilets	Pit latrines	Textbooks	Dictionaries	Desks
Bor A Primary School	283	195	8	4		6	400	10	325
Public Primary School	128	204	6	5		4	249	15	89
Pabel Primary School	250	409	12	15		9	354	14	312
Golden Heart Primary School	243	232	13	8		3	110	37	105
Christian High School							200	3	
St Andrew High School	658	427	36	70		7	180	50	217
Bor IDP/ALP	194	383	4	6		1	45	2	40
Taragook IDP Primary School	6	18				1			

This table reveals the disparities, which include enrolment and dropout patterns, sanitation facilities, learning resources, and educational resource challenges.

Enrolment and Dropout Patterns

The enrollment of St. Andrew High School has the highest student enrolment (658 girls and 427 boys), followed by Pabiel Primary School and BorA Primary School. Taragook IDP Primary School has the lowest, with only six girls and 18 boys. Gender distribution in most schools is not even higher; more boys than girls are enrolled, except for Bor A Primary School and Golden Heart Primary School. St. Andrew High School has a significant dropout rate (36 girls and 70 boys), suggesting potential challenges in student retention.

Sanitation Facilities

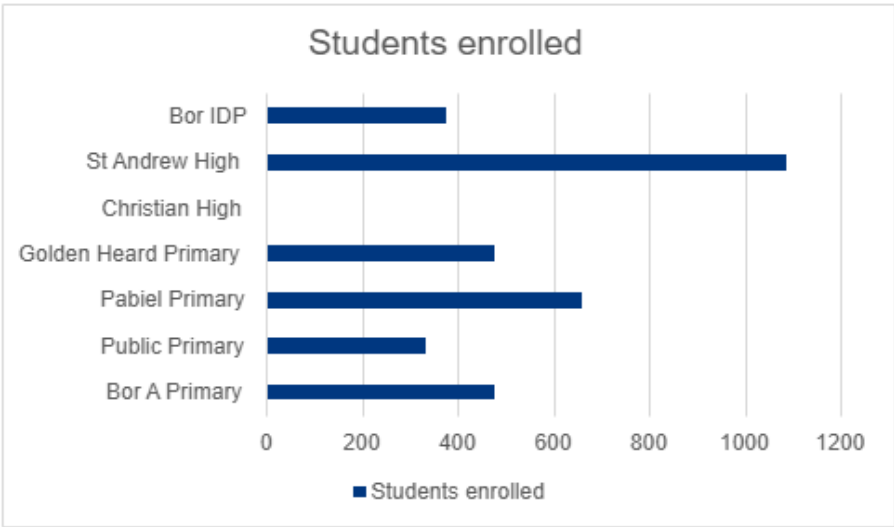
The table inadequately details sanitation. Only the number of pit latrines is given for some schools, but toilets are not consistently accounted for. From what can be observed, Taragook IDP Primary School has only one pit latrine, which is insufficient for its student population.

Learning Resources

Bor A Primary School has the most textbooks (400), ensuring better learning opportunities. Taragook IDP Primary School has no textbooks indicated, raising concerns about resource availability. Overall, resources like dictionaries are sparse, with St. Andrew High School leading (50 dictionaries), but some schools lack them. Bor A Primary School has the most desks (325), while Taragook IDP Primary School has no, reflecting an extreme disparity.

Educational Resource Challenges

Imbalances can be seen. Schools like Taragook IDP Primary School are critically under-resourced in almost all categories. Urban vs. Rural Disparities: Schools in IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) areas suffer significantly compared to larger institutions like St. Andrew High School.



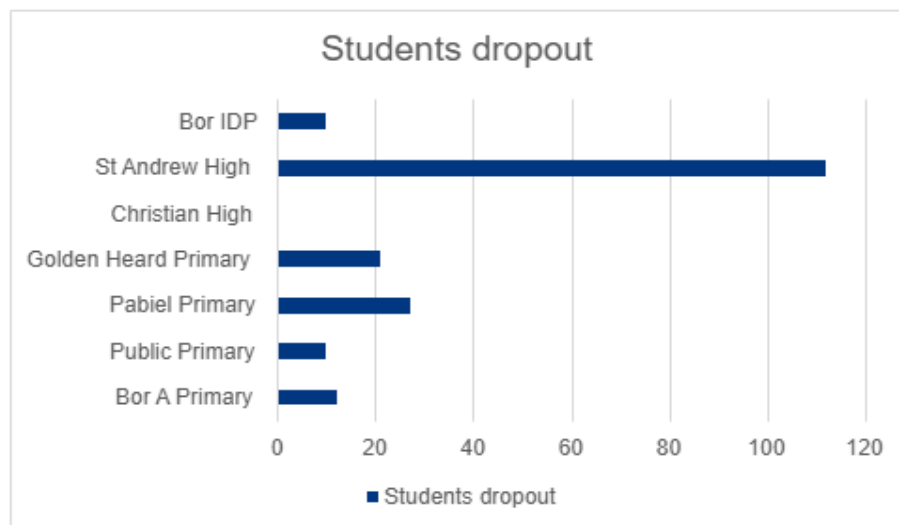


Figure 2: Comparing enrolment and dropout of students from the Table 4

Solutions for the Disparities

The actionable strategies to address the resource and enrollment challenges are here:

- **Targeted Resource Allocation:** Provide textbooks and desks to under-resourced schools like Taragook IDP Primary School and Bor IDP/ALP. Local governments or NGOs could establish resource-sharing initiatives.
- **Improving Sanitation Facilities:** Invest in building more toilets and pit latrines, particularly in high-density schools like St. Andrew High School. This can significantly impact hygiene and retention.
- **Combating Dropouts:** Address high dropout rates through financial incentives, mentorship programs, and campaigns to encourage school attendance, especially for girls.
- **Supporting IDP Schools:** Provide extra funding and necessities to Internally Displaced Person schools, such as Taragook IDP and Bor IDP, as they are critically underfunded.
- **Community Partnerships:** Partner with local communities, organisations, and international donors to ensure fair resource allocation.

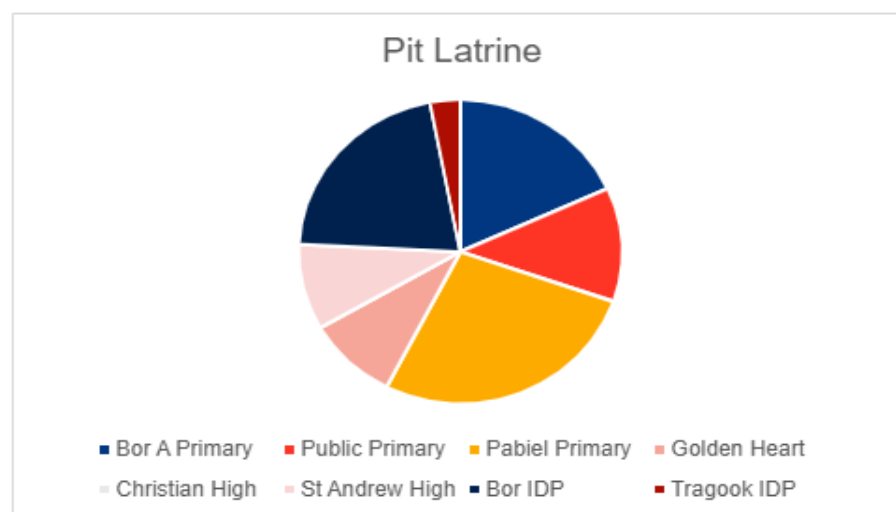


Figure 3: Pie Chart Sanitation facilities from Table 4

Table 5: Why children and parents like equitable education

Coded Reason	Example of Reason	Count
1. Equal Opportunity	Ensures every child gets a fair chance	20
2. Diversity	Promotes cultural understanding and tolerance	15
3. Social Equity	Reduces educational disparities	18
4. Accessibility	Provides resources for students with disabilities	12
5. Academic Success	Improves overall academic outcomes	25
6. Personal Growth	Supports social and emotional development	16
7. Community Value	Strengthens community ties through education	10

This table analyses why parents and children favour equitable education in regions like Jonglei State, Juba Town, Unity State, and Upper Nile State. The survey data highlights key motivations, frequency counts, and socio-educational insights to inform policy and advocacy efforts. Analysis Highlights include Academic Success, Equal Opportunity and Social Equity, and Accessibility. Academic Success was the most frequently cited reason, reflecting the practical value of improved outcomes tied to equitable education. Equal Opportunity and Social Equity emphasise the importance of fairness and reducing educational disparities. Moderate focus was placed on Diversity and Personal Growth, demonstrating appreciation for broader developmental aspects. Accessibility for students with disabilities and Community Value had relatively lower frequency counts, pointing to areas for targeted awareness campaigns. To support equitable education more comprehensively, it is recommended to focus on:

- Expanding support for accessibility to better include students with disabilities.
- Increasing initiatives that tie education to strengthening community bonds.
- Sustaining efforts to improve academic outcomes, which parents and children value highly.

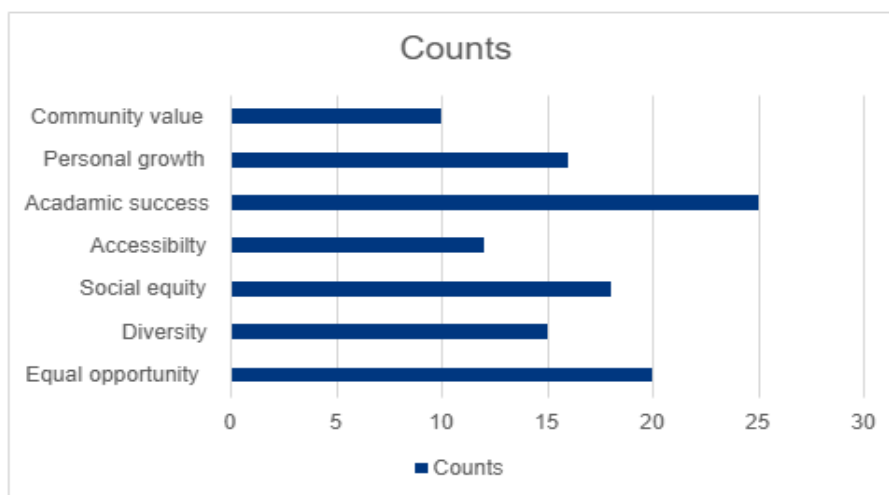


Figure 4: Visualizing Table 5

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, unlocking education rights in South Sudan is a multifaceted challenge requiring concerted effort from the government, international organisations, and local communities. The current state of education in South Sudan is marked by significant disparities, with millions of children out of school and a shortage of qualified teachers (UNICEF South Sudan, 2022). To address these issues, it is essential to implement comprehensive reforms that focus on

improving teacher training, increasing access to education, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources. Fostering a culture that values education and addressing socio-economic barriers will be crucial in creating a sustainable and inclusive education system (UNICEF South Sudan, 2021).

One significant barrier to education in South Sudan is the ongoing conflict and instability, which has led to the displacement of families and the destruction of educational infrastructure. Addressing this issue requires focusing on peacebuilding efforts and reconstructing schools and educational facilities. Furthermore, special attention must be given to the education of girls, who face additional challenges such as early marriage, gender-based violence, and cultural norms that prioritise boys' education (One Citizen Daily Newspaper, 2024).

Community involvement and local ownership of education initiatives are also critical for the success of educational reforms. Engaging parents, teachers, and community leaders in the planning and implementation of education programs ensures that these initiatives are culturally relevant and sustainable. Finally, international support and funding are vital to supplement local efforts and ensure South Sudan can achieve its education goals.

By prioritising education rights and addressing these multifaceted challenges, South Sudan can pave the way for a brighter future for its children and contribute to the nation's overall development. Education is a fundamental human right and a powerful tool for fostering peace, stability, and economic growth in the country.

Recommendations

Recommendations to complement my conclusion and actionable steps to address the educational challenges in South Sudan are as follows:

1. **Enhance Teacher Training Programs:** Develop and implement comprehensive teacher training programs to improve the quality of education. Focus on pre-service and in-service training to ensure continuous professional development for teachers. Collaborate with international organisations to provide training resources and expertise.
2. **Promote Inclusive Education:** Establish policies that support inclusive education for all children, including those with disabilities. This includes developing accessible learning materials and providing necessary accommodations in schools. Launch awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes towards children with disabilities and promote their right to education.
3. **Increase Access to Education in Rural and Conflict-Affected Areas:** Build and rehabilitate schools in rural and conflict-affected areas to provide safe and conducive learning environments. Implement mobile schools or learning centers to reach children in remote areas and internally displaced populations.
4. **Strengthen Community Engagement:** Involve parents, community leaders, and local organisations in the planning and implementation of education initiatives. This ensures that programs are culturally relevant and have local support. Promote community-based education programs that encourage local ownership and sustainability.
5. **Address Gender Disparities in Education:** Develop and enforce policies that protect girls' right to education and address barriers such as early marriage and gender-based

- violence. Provide scholarships and financial incentives to encourage girls' school enrollment and retention.
6. **Leverage Technology for Education:** Utilize technology to provide remote learning opportunities and bridge educational gaps, especially in areas with limited access to traditional schooling. Train teachers and students using digital tools and resources to enhance the learning experience.
 7. **Ensure Sustainable Funding:** Secure long-term funding from local governments and international donors to support educational reforms and infrastructure development. Establish transparent mechanisms for allocating and monitoring education funds to ensure accountability and effectiveness.
 8. **Monitor and Evaluate Progress:** Implement robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track the progress of educational initiatives and make data-driven decisions. Regularly assess the impact of programs and adjust strategies based on feedback and lessons learned.
 9. **Promote Peacebuilding and Stability:** Integrate peace education into the curriculum to foster a culture of peace and reconciliation among students. Support efforts to stabilise the region and reduce conflict, creating a safer environment for children to attend school.

By implementing these recommendations, South Sudan can create a more equitable and inclusive education system, ultimately contributing to the nation's development and stability. Education is a fundamental human right and a powerful catalyst for positive change.

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