

**INTRODUCTION TO ISSUE 2:  
“NOT WITHOUT THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE”:  
SOME REASONS FOR ITS RELEVANCE TODAY**

Few messages are as brief and rotund as the proverb that says that “educating a woman is educating a community”, which has been adopted by different educative and social organizations and entities, though not just by them. Currently, gimmicky slogans are widely used. An example of this is the last slogan launched by the Platform for Action: “2015: a key year for women”. Indeed, the personal benefit and, therefore, the benefits for the community that this brings were widely analyzed, scrutinized, systematized, and designed around indicators of different nature by the supranational organizations since the seventies and, in an intensive way, nowadays. They are actually witnesses of an unequal reality that is spread around the world and has multiple iridescence manifested by the social, economic, political and legal contexts where women are around the globe. Organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank and the OECD – naming the most relevant in this trend, applied diverse, proactive and projective measures on this topic and from their idiosyncratic focus. On the one hand, it is important to work bravely against the obstacles faced by the mainstream policies (such as “transversality” in the gender policies) like, regarding to our topic, the lack of access to education. Continuing with this example, and deepening now about the reasons of the first cause, there was a film shown in the last months at the cinemas about this issue. It was the pedagogical poem by Plisson, the film “On the Way to School” (2013), which translate also the book by Marie Clarie Javoy and that shows access to school as an honor and never as a punishment. This is an epic lesson in the search of school knowledge that, sponsored by UNESCO and UNICEF, tells how the lack of access to school is not an obstacle in the case of these children to transform their daily periplus into a daily

achievement. It is Zahira's case, the Moroccan girl who walks 22 kilometers to go to school; Micaela who, on her horse Chiverito, rides 18 kilometers with her brother through the inhospitable Argentinean Pampa; or the Kenyan Salomé who, accompanied by her brother Jackson – who got used to flank wild animals, often dangerous, in a daily school route in a country of as beautiful as dangerous spots. Returning to my initial argumentation, also, on the other hand, we must reinforce, as I mentioned earlier, purposeful policies that work –as the campaign of prevention of illnesses, the fight against violence to women already in the school or the financial measures as awards to families whose decision about letting their daughters go to school is continued on time.

The supranational organizations, indeed, have taken note about the benefits that having an educated woman brings in all countries and regions; even though their etiological approach and even more clearly, the development paradigms in which they are based, are often different. For this purpose, they have done a complex diagnosis of the situation of both genders, masculine and feminine, around the world; about their necessities, their ambitions, also their achievements, their capacities, their necessity to acquire competences for life and the life-long learning and, de facto, generating an infrastructure from within whose analysis turn out to be quite revealing, as I recently analyzed in an article whose reference is included at the end of this introduction.

This is the case of the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) that, through the Human Development Index (HDI), tackled in a specific way the measure of gender issues, as the Index of Gender Inequality (IGD) shows, which recalculates the IGD according to the sum of taxes that are related to that index. The same occurs with the World Bank and the creation of the Global Gender Gap Index, which evaluates the existent inequalities between men and women in the scope of economic participation, of educative achievement, of health and survival, of healthy life expectancy and of political empowerment. In this shallow analysis, I must mention the OECD (Organization for the Economic Cooperation

and Development) and its explicit compromise with the policies of gender development attached to the policies of Cooperation to development (DAC-Development Aid Cooperation) and its portal ‘Gendernet’ where an index is analyzed: Gender Equality and Development, whose premises are close to the analysis done from the World Bank. Last, I must mention the broad case of the United Nations (UN), that through UNIFEM, entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and through the creation of the CEDAW (Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women), has generated a solid base where the mainstreaming policies can be supported. Within the same organization, we cannot forget UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), with an explicitly educational idiosyncrasy and, as has crystallized its compromise with the Millennium Development Goal (now Sustainable Development Goals-SDG) related to equity in education with strong policies on this subject that were established, becoming visible through its specialized publications and from the enforcement of its Gender Parity Index (GPI), which, in this case, sticks to the explicitly educative data when it refers to the issue of whether or not there is equality of conditions and access between boys and girls in all education levels.

The monographic of the JOSPOE that we present in this introduction tackles issues arising from a scope of investigation and study whose current prolixity is a vital and evident sign of the fact that the taken policies around the gender issue concern and worry the supranational policies. All this is covered under the recognition about the fact that there is a conceptual debate at the root. The date is also ideological -as amazing as the conceptual debate-, because: what do we mean when we use the term “equity”? Is it the same as to talk about “equality”? This is, are we assuming the adoption of policies of similar nature? Together with this initial issue, which models are being used to manage equity of gender policies in the supranational agendas?

The articles in this monographic are accurate in this analysis, while contextualizing the adoption of a terminology related to an education policy which is derived from the development model tackled at a meso, macro, and micro level. Indeed, there are three approaches that were adopted to vertebrate the different views tackled in this monographic. The first is more global, fulfilling its role of prologue to a state of affairs that does not stop: it is the case of the article that introduces this issue of the Journal, by Elaine Unterhalter, whose presence constitutes another proof of her already shown commitment with a militant investigation, hers, with the gender approach in the last decades. I deeply thank her, together with the rest of collaborations, her generosity towards this issue of the journal. This time she presents a new evaluation of the inequality according to an environment, as she names it, of disperse multipolarity that allows the translation of inequality of what, towards who and how, to lead to the reflection about the need of taking effective education policies (she scrutinizes the realities from the program Girls' Education Challenge of the Department for the International Development –DFID of the UK) that consider the gender as an adjective and as a verb. The issue continues with the input by María Pilar Domínguez Castillo, who reminds us that parity policies should transit necessarily, via educative transformation, towards the gender equality, keeping in mind that the guarantee of the right to education is not a mere matter of data -as she well reveals- and unveiling the approaches of education policy that should lead to that end. To conclude this first block, Miriam Lorente offers an accurate interpretation about the binomial gender and capacities by giving the readers keys for interpretation about how it should be read and applied in the named “countries of development”.

The second approach tackles more specifically the task developed by the supranational organizations that maintain a programmatic line, strong and continued in time, on mainstreaming. In the case of UNESCO, represented in this issue by Miriam Carreño with her review to the Major Project of Education (MPE) in Latin America and the Caribbean, one of the most idiosyncratic programs in which the slogan “Lifelong Learning” raised and

that crystallized in policies of adult alphabetization, in a period of prolific times, between the decade of the eighties until the year two thousand; and continuing with the research carried out by Nuria Canorea about UNIFEM, a United Nations organization named above and that puts woman at the center, and its inestimable role about the global gender policies. The analysis by the OECD, through PISA -its best known and scrutinized research- is carried out by Vanisse Simone Alves and Robson Sipraki. It tackles the results obtained by the students in Mathematics and interpreted with a gender approach in Brasil, her country. Last, the gender policies applied by the supranational organization of the European Union are also addressed: Eva Ramírez and María Matarranz offer, in this line, an interesting reasoning about how the EU crystallizes and under what parameters the gender equality in education and how it is conceived.

To conclude this review to the gender issue, the micro perspective was also essential. This micro perspective referred to countries and it is necessary to investigate about how they crystallize the global policies in the most immediate contexts and how the latter are symbolized in the first. This block is the most numerous in contributions. The first article constitutes an example of how to work with the same goal is built in a privileged and in a still necessary strategy to wield this global and as complex as challenging view on its objectives. Professors Teresa Terrón, Carmen Monreal, Rocío Cárdenas y Victoria Pérez write about the transnational importance of a research project set out in Andalucía, el GENDERCITY, with partners from the European Union and Latin America, with the goal of generating nets of international scientific communication and of promoting the studies about gender relations based on the interdisciplinary as one of its signs of identity. The rest of articles are already contextualized in specific countries. Inmaculada González y Manuel Ledesma focus on the Sub-Saharan Africa to relate the experiences that work and that are favorable to the gender equality. The proposal offered by Lucía Lomba tackles the subject of coeducation and the impact to the education policies of two countries that are very far geographically: Kenia and India. And the article by Irene Martínez -with the defense of the

paradigm of a critical pedagogic with a gender approach- will help to figure out the feminism discourse in a postmodernist environment and it is placed in the policies applied in Mozambique.

Last, this view –more micro- is even more evident when it applies to our country, Spain. Two valuable analysis are a good proof of it: on the one hand, the comparative research of the agents involved in the gender equality in the education centers through the School Boards as a good example of transversality of gender in education through the Spanish national and regional policies, by the authors Montserrat Grañeras, Patricia Ibáñez, Natalia Gil, and Patricia González. And on the other hand, without forgetting the comparative perspective, the local subject has also an obvious impact in the adoption of the global policies that gives a view of governability increasingly homogeneous. Thus this monographic was neither indifferent to the consequences that this has in the construction of related discourses and policies. For the Spanish case, as we mentioned, it is extremely illustrative the example given by Noelia Fernández González and Nuria González Clemares, concerning the coeducation policies of the current Spanish Law, LOMCE, in relation to the CEDAW –mentioned above.

I finish here. I had the opportunity in June 2015 of participating in the Fourth International Forum of ONGD as partners with UNESCO, sponsored by this organism and in its own headquarters. During those intense days, the debate was focused on women's role in the fight against poverty: the approach tackled by all the initiatives brought by these partners (foundations, ongd, associations, etc.) focused on how women face poverty and how they fight against it in an efficient and empowering way. And in all them: education. Education, education, education. Education is explicitly considered in all interventions as the most accurate end (not just a mean and tool) for the development of all actual and future women's capacities. It cannot be otherwise.

## BIBLOGRAFIC REFERENCES:

MARTÍNEZ USARRALDE, M.J. (2015): “Equidad de género en las agendas supranacionales. Evidencias educativas desde una lectura comparada”. *Bordón* 67 (1), 2015, 57-70. DOI: 10.13042/BORDON/2015.67104.