

Assessment #3:

PISA and Norway – Environmental Scan

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Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a global initiative run by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development). PISA began conducting studies which began in the year 2000. These survey studies began to evaluate education systems internationally in participating countries/economies. These survey studies compare the reading, arithmetic, and science knowledge and abilities of 15-year-old students. Every three years, the PISA survey is carried out.

In the 2018 PISA survey, the country of Norway ranked #23 in the score range between 450-500 in its worldwide ranking. These scores consisted of Common Core subjects that include Mathematics, Science, and Reading. The Norwegian students achieved 490 points in Science, 499 points in Reading, and 501 points in Mathematics (OECD, 2018). Females performed better than the males with a statistically significant difference of 47 points (OECD average: 30 points higher for girls).

The Norwegian Central Bureau of Statistics conducted a study in 2017 to further the understanding of why Norwegian females performed better than males. This study also showed that females perform better than males in almost every subject except gym. The Norwegian Central Bureau of Statistics concluded that there is a gender gap most significant in Norwegian and English, and least in mathematics (SSB, 2017).

Norway underwent a variety of educational transitions in previous years to obtain higher scores in 2018. The Norwegian government began testing inclusion and exclusion in its national exams in 2006. Numerous improvements emphasize including students with special needs and those who would be disqualified from taking national exams. Due to the inclusion criteria, this

was a finding on why Norway's test results were higher. Norway's government found other ways to improve the schools' test scores.

In 2006, the PISA Norway team began to plan training events for school administrators in several towns around the nation. These training sessions included a PISA session in addition to information on the handbook and test administration procedures. Each seminar included a session that was specifically devoted to student exclusion and the requirements (Aursand, 2018). Due to these training sessions, reading skills have significantly improved, and Norwegian students are reading above OECD average. The Norwegian scores in Mathematics and Science are comparable to the national average, but they nonetheless indicate better growth, primarily in Science.

References

Aursand, L. R. (2018). *What [some] students know and can do: A case study of Norway, PISA, and exclusion* (Master's thesis)

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