

Comparison of Female Teachers in Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Education: China and the World

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This report is based on statistics published yearly in the World Bank and the Education Statistics Yearbook by the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. Using these freely available statistics, *ECNU Review of Education* aims to provide a basic comparative overview of representation of female teachers in all levels of basic education—both in China and the world. While this report articulates the aforementioned data in a comparative way, no absolute or final conclusions are meant to be drawn from these comparisons. Rather, we hope the following serves as a method of drawing attention to educational issues such as gender equality. Furthermore, we also hope that this report will serve to encourage follow-up research related to this topic.

Before comparing China’s percentage of female educators across all level of basic education to that of the world average, certain distinctions are necessary. Following a law passed in 1986, the People’s Republic of China solidified the country’s compulsory education standard of 6 years of primary education and 3 years of secondary education. Secondary education is divided into two parts: junior secondary education and senior secondary education. Both parts include vocational schools in supplied statistics, and as such any conclusions reflect all students participating in secondary education—vocational or otherwise. Despite this, the statistics given by the Ministry of Education separate the two parts of secondary education,

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whereas the World Bank does not. In order to offer an easier-to-follow comparison, China's percentage of female teachers at the secondary level of education was found by averaging the percentages of both junior and senior secondary education. It is therefore worth noting that the annual percentage of female teachers was higher in junior secondary education than that of the senior secondary level. This difference usually took the form of being within three percentage points—the smallest being a 2.53% difference in 2013 and the largest a 3.3% difference in 2017. In addition, data are taken only from the years 2013–2017 solely for the reason that the Ministry of Education has only published data for these years.

Primary education

Primary education sees the highest percentage of female educators both in China and worldwide. These values represent the highest across the three levels of education. Both China and the world show a positive trend in annual percentages. In addition, the primary level of education sees the fastest growth in the 5 years of published statistics, represented by China's 6.53% jump from 2013 to 2017. China saw an annual average growth of 1.63% in female educators, with the greatest annual growth of 1.84% taking place between 2016 and 2017. Despite initially starting nearly three percentage points lower than the worldwide average, China's most recent statistics from 2017 now represent a 1.42% lead over the world. Given the increasing annual growth in China's percentage of female educators, it would be sound to assume that this trend will continue with future statistics (see Figure 1).

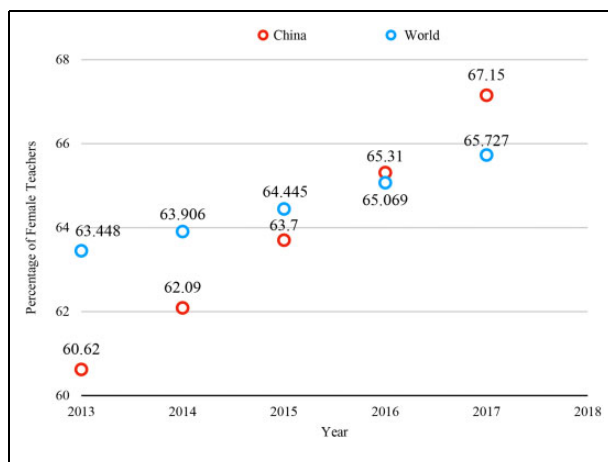


Figure 1. Comparison of percentage of female teachers in primary education.

Secondary education

Figure 2 shows the compared percentages of female educators in secondary education in both the world (World Bank, 2017) and China during the years 2013 (Ministry of Education, 2014), 2014 (Ministry of Education, 2015), 2015 (Ministry of Education, 2016), 2016 (Ministry of Education, 2017) and 2017 (Ministry of Education, 2018). While both China and the world see a positive trend in percentages of female educators in secondary education, the worldwide average sees an occasional decrease. During the same period of time, China maintains consistent annual growth. While this growth starts at a mere 0.46%, it quickly doubles in all subsequent years. China's percentages start below that of the world—a deficit of 2.73%, similar to that of the China–world primary education deficit of the same year—and end 0.41% higher than that of the world. While China's primary education percentage overtook the world's in 2016, the secondary level of education doesn't see China overtake the world until 2017. Similar to the primary education level, it would be sound to assume continued positive growth (see Figure 2).

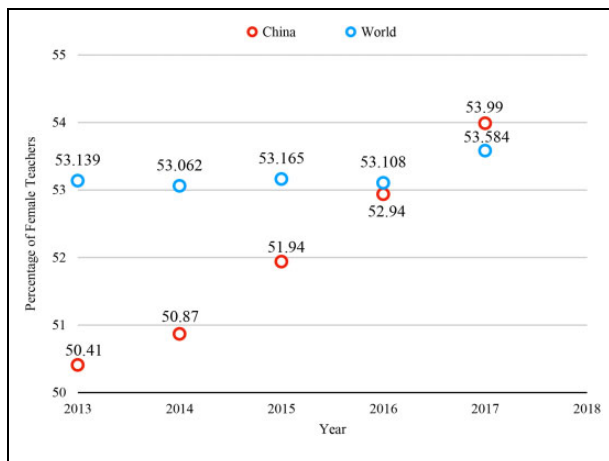


Figure 2. Comparison of percentage of female teachers in secondary education.

Tertiary education

Figure 3 shows the compared percentages of female educators in tertiary education in both the world (World Bank, 2017) and China during the years 2013 (Ministry of Education, 2014), 2014 (Ministry of Education, 2015), 2015 (Ministry of Education, 2016), 2016 (Ministry of Education, 2017) and 2017 (Ministry of Education, 2018). While other levels of education see China starting below the worldwide average, China's tertiary education level sees far higher percentages of female teachers. Starting in 2013 at a six percentage point lead, China's annual growth only increases. The world average sees growth until a dip in 2016, before making its greatest leap in

2017. The World Bank defines equal female employment in all levels of education as being greater than or equal to 50%. All previous levels of education met this standard, and tertiary education is the first and only level to have this standard not apply. While neither China nor the world on average has achieved this result, China is far closer. Based on the trend of continuous annual growth, China would be well within the equality threshold in the next year (see Figure 3).

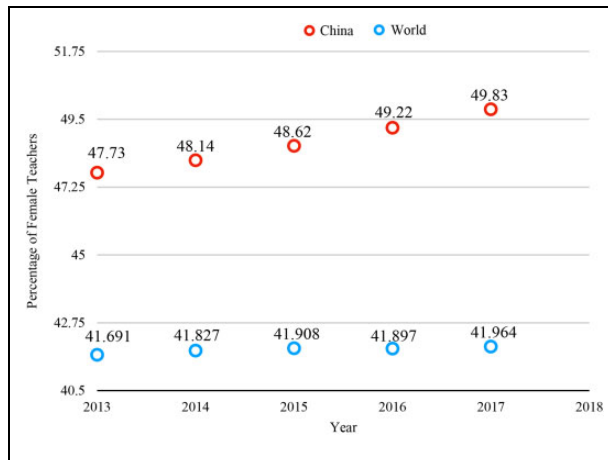


Figure 3. Comparison of percentage of female teachers in tertiary education.

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