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**GENDER AND EDUCATION IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA:
POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN
RIGHTS FRAMEWORK**

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the effectiveness of international law as a tool for achieving gender parity in education. Although a fundamental right to education free from gender disparity has been established under myriad international legal instruments, and is long-recognized as both a global priority and means to eradicate poverty and other world crises, chronic and pervasive educational deprivations persist for over 90 million girls worldwide. The schism between international legal mandates and national compliance is best illustrated through the lens of South Africa's struggle to overcome the legacy of apartheid, sexual violence in schools, and lingering cultural attitudes that serve to denigrate girls' and women's role in society. Despite these obstacles, South Africa's global human rights construction of national law offers a promising model for achieving gender parity in education. The Article concludes by recognizing that while the international human rights framework cannot alone overcome national resource shortages, cultural values that denigrate women, and complex systemic deficiencies, it can serve as an aspirational tool for promoting progressive change toward achieving gender equality targets in education.