

Of Standardized Student Measurements and Tests in the Dominican Republic

Dr. Pedro Tavaréz Da Costa  
&  
Fransheska Reyes Aria, B.A.  
The School of Foreign Languages  
Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo  
UASD

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## *Introduction*

The present work constitutes an exhaustive comparison between two of the most discussed measurement tools applied to test the quality of education in our country (The PISA Test and the E F English Proficiency English Index), for that purpose a questionnaire was administered to 100 students in three different Advanced English Sections of the undergraduate program (Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages) being virtually taught now, at the Universidad Autonoma de Santo, which is the State College of the Dominican Republic.

In Chapter I of this investigation, and within the scope of a theoretical framework, the premises and justifications for conducting this research were clearly established and postulated.

Chapter II offered us by its part a whole Literary review where many sources concerning the investigation were analyzed on the light of external sources as well as, of internal experiences on this matter.

Chapter III was solely dedicated to explain the research design and method in order to gather the specific data needed to convey the ends of this work.

In Chapter IV a discussion of the Research Questions employed in this work and which constituted the guiding-lines of the Questionnaire were held to completely satisfied the purpose of this research, and of course the final conclusion arrived on the basis of the whole experiment and of the results of those questions.

### *Abstract*

The present work seeks to establish a comparison between two different and distant evaluation tools applied to the Dominican student population in order to measure the efficiency of our educational system in the recent years, one of them measured the quality of Dominican education in three areas (the PISA Test), whereas the other tested the quality of the proficiency of the English language (EF English Proficiency Index), both for the pre-college levels.

Although one of our cherished ideas was our having analyzed such tests of extreme relevance for us, the EFL Teachers and Professors at many different levels, as the TOEFL Test, but due to a lack of available data, that purpose has been postponed at the moment, and we have to conform to compare the PISA Test and the EF EPI (which have been applied, analyzed and roughly criticized in the Dominican Republic for both the Ministries of Education and for the opposing non-governing sectors, as well.

This research is a comparative study resulting out of the analysis of the two above mentioned measurements entities held in this decade and consequently all of the data available are contained in them, plus a questionnaire submitted to three sections of advanced English students at Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo. To that effect a questionnaire is defined as “A questionnaire is a research instrument that consists of a set of questions or other types of prompts that aims to collect information from a respondent.” A research questionnaire is typically a mix of close-ended questions and open-ended questions. Open-ended, long-form questions offer the respondent the ability to elaborate on their thoughts. Research questionnaires were developed in 1838 by the Statistical Society of London. (Question Pro, 2021).

The results of the questionnaires submitted to those college students are duly analyzed and converted into a useful data for the corresponding conclusions in the final chapters of this work.

Keywords: PISA Test, EF English Index, Pre-College level, Education in the D.R.

## Chapter I: Theoretical Framework

### *Statement of the Problem*

The present research sought to compare the results of the two namely important measurement tests, of extreme relevance for the Dominican Public Education System, on the light of the PISA Tests and that of the EP English Index results, held in different times in this nation. and on the light of the results of the analysis of a Questionnaire submitted to three On-line Advanced English Classes at Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo (Semester January-May 2021), during this time of the pandemic.

Whereas PISA measures the ability of 15-year-old students who attend public and private schools to solve real-life problems. The test focuses on three areas: math, science, and, with special focus in this issue, reading. It is applied every 3 years, so the next test will take place in 2021 and will be communicated by the end of 2022. (EDUCA, 2018).

In general terms, the country scored 342 points on the reading test. In 2018, 12 have been the countries that registered a drop in this test compared to 2015; Dominican Republic among these. Although the fall is most likely due to the increase in coverage and the retention of some 9 thousand low-performing students who were not in the classroom in 2015 (coverage for 15-year-olds went from 68% in 2015 to 73% in 2018 ), the result is equally worrying, given the low performance achieved. It is true that the country outperformed the Philippines in this test, but it is also true that more than 90% of Filipino students do not receive classes in the language they speak at home. (EDUCA, 2018).

But also for our disappointment and dismay EDUCA (A Non-for the profit society) which deals with educational issues in the Dominican Republic, and that is regarded by many as a lobbyist of the Private Enterprises which aim to privatize or re-direct the public education system for the benefit of the Great National Entrepreneurship, also states “80% of 15-year-old students who attend public or private schools in the Dominican Republic fail to exceed level 2, the minimum expected proficiency threshold for reading. That is, they are only able to understand the literal meaning of a sentence or short passage of a text. To just recognize the main topic on which the writing is about, as well as to identify the author's purpose. Students are able to make simple connections with complementary parts of the story or background information, but no further. This level remains in the elementary expected for the age, when level 6, the most proficient, expects students to demonstrate a broad understanding of the text presented in its

literal and abstract aspects. Specifically, students who reach this level are able to relate relevant information and indirectly link it with the meaning of the text, in order to compare, contrast and integrate diverse information from different perspectives, and therefore make useful inferences”. (EDUCA, 2018). Needless to say that the degree of success in the teaching/learning process of the foreign languages are not measured by the above mentioned battery of tests, a reason we do not know why, but that constitutes a legitimate demand for the educational community at all levels.

By the other hand, but not as a counterpart, it is brought to the table the results of the so-called EF English Index which is The **EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI)** and attempts to rank countries by the average level of English language skills amongst those adults who took the EF test.<sup>[1]</sup> It is the product of EF Education First, an international education company, and draws its conclusions from data collected via English tests available for free over the internet.<sup>[2][3]</sup> The index is an online survey first published in 2011<sup>[4]</sup> based on test data from 1.7 million test takers.<sup>[5]</sup> The most recent, tenth edition was released in November 2020 (EF EPI, 2020).

After having occupied a better place in the Latin-American ranking (2014), the Dominican Republic currently occupies the Seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) place in the region with 499 point (low) for the 2020 report, and a place 48th to a world scale. (2020). which in comparison to the PISA Tests results made things look better for our country, but that is the key point of this research project.

### *Importance of the Problem*

Since there is not a culture in this country of data analysis on the light of the results of standardized test and on the comparison of the results of the different battery of tests undertaken by the Dominican students as part of the international commitments assumed by the national educational authorities like the Ministry of Education (MINERD) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MESCYT), in order to accomplish the goals and objective set by these ministries

pursuant to the focalizations of the UNO, UNESCO, The Inter-American Bank of Development and the World Bank, among others, it is of the utmost importance to produce this paper in order to have a clear and scientific-based idea of what is going on in education in general, in this country, different than the official announcements and data often posted in national newspaper and in the social media to satisfy and please the opinions in favor of the government.

### *General Objective*

To thoroughly compare and analyze the results of two standardized measurement systems.

### *Specific Objectives*

- 1.-To analyze the data offered by the ODCE and EDUCA on the results of the PISA Tests.
- 2.-To analyze the data offered by EF EPI on the results of the English Index to our country.
- 3.-To duly examine the perception of our College Students on the questionnaire exposed to them.

### *Research Questions:*

- 1.-What are the so-called PISA Tests, and how they have influenced the Education System?
- 2.-Why does PISA Tests not measure the teaching/learning process of English?
- 3.-What is the EF Index of Proficiency in English, and what is its importance to our country?
- 4.-What are the so-called Structural Issues of our Educational System?
- 5.-What are the so-called Conjuncture Issues of our Educational System?
- 6.-What type of solutions are the Non-governmental organization putting on the table?
- 7.-Is there a need for Bilingual High Schools in our Country?

### *Definition of Terms*

#### 1.-Standardized Tests:

A standardized test is any form of test that (1) requires all test takers to answer the same questions, or a selection of questions from common bank of questions, in the same way, and that (2) is scored in a “standard” or consistent manner, which makes it possible to compare the relative performance of individual students or groups of students. While different types of tests and assessments may be “standardized” in this way, the term is primarily associated with large-scale tests administered to large populations of students, such as a multiple-choice test given to

all the eighth-grade public-school students in a particular state, for example. (The Glossary of Education Reform- On-line Resource, 2021).

## 2.-The PISA Tests:

It is the acronym for Program for International Student Assessment held and produced by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD).

## 3.-The EF EPI:

It is the acronym for Education First English Proficiency index.

## 4.-EDUCA/ Action for Entrepreneurship Education:

A Dominican Entrepreneur organization for Education.

## 5.-MINERD”

The Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic

## 6.-UASD

The Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo

### *Geographical & Historical Backgrounds where the Problem is examined*

This research is being conducted at the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo, a nationwide Dominican State College within the context of three Advanced English Sections, corresponding to the graduate program of the career: Bachelor’ Degree in Foreign Languages (See the university Graduate programs), which are virtually taught during the Covid 19 pandemic, in the present year of 2021, but let us first take a historical glimpse of this academy.

### *History of the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo*

The University of Santo Domingo was created through the Bull In Apostolatus Culmine, issued on October 28, 1538 by Pope Paul III, which elevated to that category the General Study that the Dominicans ruled since 1518, in Santo Domingo, viceregal headquarters. of colonization and the oldest colonial settlement in the New World.

The University of Alcalá de Henares was its model and as such was the bearer of the Renaissance ideas that emerged from the medieval world, from which Spain emerged from the days of the conquest.

The nascent University began its teachings organized in four Faculties: Medicine, Law, Theology and Arts, in accordance with the norms established at the time for similar institutions in the metropolis. The Arts studies included two modalities, namely: the "trivium" which



included Grammar, Rhetoric and Logic and the "quadrivium" which included Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy and Music ".

### Vicissitudes

In 1801, as a consequence of the Haitian occupation of the country, the University interrupted its operation, because the Dominicans, who ruled it, abandoned the colony. It was reopened in 1815, when the colony returned to Spanish sovereignty, but from then on it adopted a secular character.

Between 1815 and 1821 it functioned under the rector of Dr. José Núñez de Cáceres. The University closed its doors again in 1822 due to the fact that a large number of its students were recruited for military service by order of the Haitian regime that governed the nation. With the consummation of the Independence of the Republic in 1844, the will to reestablish the University, a symbol of cultural tradition and the character of the newly acquired nationality, was reborn in the Dominicans.

Responding to this claim, on June 16, 1859, President Pedro Santana promulgated a law that restored the old University of Santo Domingo, with an academic composition similar to that of medieval universities (four faculties: Philosophy, Jurisprudence, Medical Sciences and Sagradas Letras) and as a dependency of the central government through the General Directorate of Public Instruction and the corresponding State Secretariat.

But for reasons of political contingencies, the aforementioned provision was not executed and the University was not reopened.

On December 31, 1866, the Professional Institute was created by decree, which functioned in place and in substitution of the old University of Santo Domingo.

On May 10, 1891, the Professional Institute closed its doors, until August 16, 1895, which reappeared under the rector of Archbishop Fernando Arturo de Merino.

On November 16, 1914, the President of the Republic, Dr. Ramón Báez, who was also Rector of the Professional Institute, transformed the Professional Institute into the University of Santo Domingo by decree.

From 1916 to 1924, the University had to interrupt its operation as a result of the North American intervention.

During the 31 years of the tyranny of dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, the University of Santo Domingo, like the other institutions in the country, was deprived of the most elementary freedoms for the fulfillment of its high mission, becoming an instrument of control political and propagation of totalitarian slogans, against whose damages the little material progress achieved by the Institution in those years of despotic government was worth nothing, such as the acquisition of land and the construction of the University City.

#### Autonomy and university jurisdiction

Law No. 5778 of December 31, 1961 endowed the University with autonomy. From that moment he began to debate to achieve institutional balance and a climate of coexistence that would allow it to develop all his creative faculties. But after three decades subjected to the iron will of a regime contrary to all forms of human communication that did not serve its interests, the institution did not find it easy to initially use the newly acquired freedom and self-government to carry out its mission of service and contribute. to the cultural and economic improvement of our people.

On February 17, 1962, the first authorities were elected under the autonomy regime. Law 5778 on autonomy also enshrined the jurisdiction for the university campus, but this was suppressed by the de facto government of the Triumvirate, through Law # 292, of June 12, 1964. (UASD Webpage, 2018).

## Chapter II: Literature Review

*An Acrid Criticism on the PISA Tests* and of the OECD/ A letter that made History:

In a letter signed by more than One Hundred Scholars, International Colleges and Universities from all over the world, to Dr. Andreas Schleicher, Director of the OECD, the organization in charge of administering the PISA Test all over the world (2014) , and where they complaint that the PISA Test are damaging education (The Guardian, 2014), the following letter was addressed to him and the letter says as follows: (The entire letter is transcribed)

Dear Dr. Schleicher,

We write to you in your capacity as OECD's (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) director of the Programme of International Student Assessment (Pisa). Now in its 13th year, Pisa is known around the world as an instrument to rank OECD and non-OECD countries (60-plus at last count) according to a measure of academic achievement of 15-year-old students in mathematics, science, and reading. Administered every three years, Pisa results are anxiously awaited by governments, education ministers, and the editorial boards of newspapers, and are cited authoritatively in countless policy reports. They have begun to deeply influence educational practices in many countries. As a result of Pisa, countries are overhauling their education systems in the hopes of improving their rankings. Lack of progress on Pisa has led to declarations of crisis and "Pisa shock" in many countries, followed by calls for resignations, and far-reaching reforms according to Pisa precepts.

We are frankly concerned about the negative consequences of the Pisa rankings. These are some of our concerns:

While standardised testing has been used in many nations for decades (despite serious reservations about its validity and reliability), Pisa has contributed to an escalation in such testing and a dramatically increased reliance on quantitative measures. For example, in the US, Pisa has been invoked as a major justification for the recent "Race to the Top" programme, which has increased the use of standardised testing for student-, teacher-, and administrator evaluations, which rank and label students, as well as teachers and administrators according to the results of tests widely known to be imperfect (see, for example, Finland's unexplained decline from the top of the Pisa table).

In education policy, Pisa, with its three-year assessment cycle, has caused a shift of attention to short-term fixes designed to help a country quickly climb the rankings, despite research showing that enduring changes in education practice take decades, not a few years, to come to fruition. For example, we know that the status of teachers and the prestige of teaching as a profession have a strong influence on the quality of instruction, but that status varies strongly across cultures and is not easily influenced by short-term policy.

By emphasising a narrow range of measurable aspects of education, Pisa takes attention away from the less measurable or immeasurable educational objectives like physical, moral, civic and artistic development, thereby dangerously narrowing our collective imagination regarding what education is and ought to be about.

As an organisation of economic development, OECD is naturally biased in favour of the economic role of public [state] schools. But preparing young men and women for gainful employment is not the only, and not even the main goal of public education, which has to prepare students for participation in democratic self-government, moral action and a life of personal development, growth and wellbeing.

Unlike United Nations (UN) organisations such as UNESCO or UNICEF that have clear and legitimate mandates to improve education and the lives of children around the world, OECD has no such mandate. Nor are there, at present, mechanisms of effective democratic participation in its education decision-making process.

To carry out Pisa and a host of follow-up services, OECD has embraced "public-private partnerships" and entered into alliances with multi-national for-profit companies, which stand to gain financially from any deficits—real or perceived—unearthed by Pisa. Some of these companies provide educational services to American schools and school districts on a massive, for-profit basis, while also pursuing plans to develop for-profit elementary education in Africa, where OECD is now planning to introduce the Pisa programme.

Finally, and most importantly: the new Pisa regime, with its continuous cycle of global testing, harms our children and impoverishes our classrooms, as it inevitably involves more and longer batteries of multiple-choice testing, more scripted "vendor"-made lessons, and less autonomy for teachers. In this way Pisa has further increased the already high stress level in schools, which endangers the wellbeing of students and teachers.

These developments are in overt conflict with widely accepted principles of good educational and democratic practice:

No reform of any consequence should be based on a single narrow measure of quality.

No reform of any consequence should ignore the important role of non-educational factors, among which a nation's socio-economic inequality is paramount. In many countries, including the US, inequality has dramatically increased over the past 15 years, explaining the widening educational gap between rich and poor which education reforms, no matter how sophisticated, are unlikely to redress.

An organization like OECD, as any organization that deeply affects the life of our communities, should be open to democratic accountability by members of those communities.

We are writing not only to point out deficits and problems. We would also like to offer constructive ideas and suggestions that may help to alleviate the above mentioned concerns. While in no way complete, they illustrate how learning could be improved without the above mentioned negative effects:

**1** Develop alternatives to league tables: explore more meaningful and less easily sensationalized ways of reporting assessment outcomes. For example, comparing developing countries, where 15-year-olds are regularly drafted into child labour, with first-world countries makes neither educational nor political sense and opens OECD up for charges of educational colonialism.

**2** Make room for participation by the full range of relevant constituents and scholarship: to date, the groups with greatest influence on what and how international learning is assessed are psychometricians, statisticians, and economists. They certainly deserve a seat at the table, but so do many other groups: parents, educators, administrators, community leaders, students, as well as scholars from disciplines like anthropology, sociology, history, philosophy, linguistics, as well as the arts and humanities. What and how we assess the education of 15-year-old students should be subject to discussions involving all these groups at local, national, and international levels.

**3** Include national and international organisations in the formulation of assessment methods and standards whose mission goes beyond the economic aspect of public education and which are concerned with the health, human development, wellbeing and happiness of students and teachers. This would include the above mentioned United Nations organisations, as well as teacher, parent, and administrator associations, to name a few.

**4** Publish the direct and indirect costs of administering Pisa so that taxpayers in member countries can gauge alternative uses of the millions of dollars spent on these tests and determine if they want to continue their participation in it.

**5** Welcome oversight by independent international monitoring teams which can observe the administration of Pisa from the conception to the execution, so that questions about test format and statistical and scoring procedures can be weighed fairly against charges of bias or unfair comparisons.

**6** Provide detailed accounts regarding the role of private, for-profit companies in the preparation, execution, and follow-up to the tri-annual Pisa assessments to avoid the appearance or reality of conflicts of interest.

**7** Slow down the testing juggernaut. To gain time to discuss the issues mentioned here at local, national, and international levels, consider skipping the next Pisa cycle. This would give time to incorporate the collective learning that will result from the suggested deliberations in a new and improved assessment model.

We assume that OECD's Pisa experts are motivated by a sincere desire to improve education. But we fail to understand how your organisation has become the global arbiter of the means and ends of education around the world. OECD's narrow focus on standardised testing risks turning learning into drudgery and killing the joy of learning. As Pisa has led many governments into an international competition for higher test scores, OECD has assumed the power to shape education policy around the world, with no debate about the necessity or limitations of OECD's goals. We are deeply concerned that measuring a great diversity of educational traditions and cultures using a single, narrow, biased yardstick could, in the end, do irreparable harm to our schools and our students.

Sincerely,

**Andrews, Paul** Professor of Mathematics Education, Stockholm University

**Atkinson, Lori** New York State Allies for Public Education

**Ball, Stephen J** Karl Mannheim Professor of Sociology of Education, Institute of Education, University of London

**Barber, Melissa** Parents Against High Stakes Testing

**Beckett, Lori** Winifred Mercier Professor of Teacher Education, Leeds Metropolitan University

**Berardi, Jillaine** Linden Avenue Middle School, Assistant Principal

**Berliner, David** Regents Professor of Education at Arizona State University

**Bloom, Elizabeth EdD** Associate Professor of Education, Hartwick College

**Boudet, Danielle** Oneonta Area for Public Education

**Boland, Neil** Senior lecturer, AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand

**Burris, Carol** Principal and former Teacher of the Year

**Cauthen, Nancy PhD** Change the Stakes, NYS Allies for Public Education

**Cerrone, Chris** Testing Hurts Kids; NYS Allies for Public Education

**Ciaran, Sugrue** Professor, Head of School, School of Education, University College Dublin

**Deutermann, Jeanette** Founder Long Island Opt Out, Co-founder NYS Allies for Public Education

**Devine, Nesta** Associate Professor, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

**Dodge, Arnie** Chair, Department of Educational Leadership, Long Island University

**Dodge, Judith** Author, Educational Consultant

**Farley, Tim** Principal, Ichabod Crane School; New York State Allies for Public Education

**Fellicello, Stacia** Principal, Chambers Elementary School

**Fleming, Mary** Lecturer, School of Education, National University of Ireland, Galway

**Fransson, Göran** Associate Professor of Education, University of Gävle, Sweden

**Giroux, Henry** Professor of English and Cultural Studies, McMaster University

**Glass, Gene** Senior Researcher, National Education Policy Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico

**Glynn, Kevin** Educator, co-founder of Lace to the Top

**Goldstein, Harvey** Professor of Social Statistics, University of Bristol

**Gorlewski, David** Director, Educational Leadership Doctoral Program, D'Youville College

**Gorlewski, Julie PhD**, Assistant Professor, State University of New York at New Paltz  
**Gowie, Cheryl** Professor of Education, Siena College  
**Greene, Kiersten** Assistant Professor of Literacy, State University of New York at New Paltz  
**Haimson, Leonie** Parent Advocate and Director of "Class Size Matters"  
**Heinz, Manuela** Director of Teaching Practice, School of Education, National University of Ireland Galway  
**Hughes, Michelle** Principal, High Meadows Independent School  
**Jury, Mark** Chair, Education Department, Siena College  
**Kahn, Hudson Valley** Against Common Core  
**Kayden, Michelle** Linden Avenue Middle School Red Hook, New York  
**Kempf, Arlo** Program Coordinator of School and Society, OISE, University of Toronto  
**Kilfoyle, Marla** NBCT, General Manager of BATs  
**Labaree, David** Professor of Education, Stanford University  
**Leonardatos, Harry** Principal, high school, Clarkstown, New York  
**MacBeath, John** Professor Emeritus, Director of Leadership for Learning, University of Cambridge  
**McLaren, Peter** Distinguished Professor, Chapman University  
**McNair, Jessica** Co-founder Opt-Out CNY, parent member NYS Allies for Public Education  
**Meyer, Heinz-Dieter** Associate Professor, Education Governance & Policy, State University of New York (Albany)  
**Meyer, Tom** Associate Professor of Secondary Education, State University of New York at New Paltz  
**Millham, Rosemary PhD** Science Coordinator, Master Teacher Campus Director, SUNY New Paltz  
**Millham, Rosemary** Science Coordinator/Assistant Professor, Master Teacher Campus Director, State University of New York, New Paltz  
**Oliveira Andreotti** Vanessa Canada Research Chair in Race, Inequality, and Global Change, University of British Columbia  
**Sperry, Carol** Emerita, Millersville University, Pennsylvania  
**Mitchell, Ken** Lower Hudson Valley Superintendents Council  
**Mucher, Stephen** Director, Bard Master of Arts in Teaching Program, Los Angeles  
**Tuck, Eve** Assistant Professor, Coordinator of Native American Studies, State University of New York at New Paltz  
**Naison, Mark** Professor of African American Studies and History, Fordham University; Co-Founder, Badass Teachers Association  
**Nielsen, Kris** Author, Children of the Core  
**Noddings, Nel** Professor (emerita) Philosophy of Education, Stanford University  
**Noguera, Pedro** Peter L. Agnew Professor of Education, New York University  
**Nunez, Isabel** Associate Professor, Concordia University, Chicago  
**Pallas, Aaron** Arthur I Gates Professor of Sociology and Education, Columbia University  
**Peters, Michael** Professor, University of Waikato, Honorary Fellow, Royal Society New Zealand  
**Pugh, Nigel** Principal, Richard R Green High School of Teaching, New York City  
**Ravitch, Diane** Research Professor, New York University

**Rivera-Wilson** Jerusalem Senior Faculty Associate and Director of Clinical Training and Field Experiences, University at Albany

**Roberts, Peter** Professor, School of Educational Studies and Leadership, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

**Rougle, Eija** Instructor, State University of New York, Albany

**Rudley, Lisa** Director: Education Policy-Autism Action Network

**Saltzman, Janet** Science Chair, Physics Teacher, Red Hook High School

**Schniedewind, Nancy** Professor of Education, State University of New York, New Paltz

**Silverberg, Ruth** Associate Professor, College of Staten Island, City University of New York

**Sperry, Carol** Professor of Education, Emerita, Millersville University

**St. John, Edward** Algo D. Henderson Collegiate Professor, University of Michigan

**Suzuki, Daiyu** Teachers College at Columbia University

**Swaffield, Sue** Senior Lecturer, Educational Leadership and School Improvement, University of Cambridge

**Tanis, Bianca** Parent Member: ReThinking Testing

**Thomas, Paul** Associate Professor of Education, Furman University

**Thrupp, Martin** Professor of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand

**Tobin, KT** Founding member, ReThinking Testing

**Tomlinson, Sally** Emeritus Professor, Goldsmiths College, University of London; Senior Research Fellow, Department of Education, Oxford University

**Tuck, Eve** Coordinator of Native American Studies, State University of New York at New Paltz

**VanSlyke-Briggs** Kjersti Associate Professor, State University of New York, Oneonta

**Wilson, Elaine** Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge

**Wrigley, Terry** Honorary senior research fellow, University of Ballarat, Australia

**Zahedi, Katie** Principal, Linden Ave Middle School, Red Hook, New York

**Zhao, Yong** Professor of Education, Presidential Chair, University of Oregon . (The Guardian, 2014).

### *Criticisms and Rejections to the PISA Tests in South America.*

WHY PISA IN ECUADOR/ ¿PISA para qué? El Ecuador en PISA-D, Rosa María Torres, OTRAEDUCACION.

Given the announcement by the government of Rafael Correa (2007-2017) that Ecuador will enter PISA, the article discussed the importance or not of participating in said test for "developing countries" and, specifically, in the Ecuadorian case. It was argued against the incorporation of Ecuador to PISA, taking into account, among others:

- a) the growing worldwide questioning of tests and especially of standardized tests;
- b) the growing questions about PISA also at the international level and for very different reasons;



c) the enormous weight that has been given to evaluation in Ecuador, at all levels and in all areas (a country infected by the germ of the global educational reform: competence, standardization, standardized tests, 'excellence', titles, rankings). PISA will exacerbate these trends, which have nothing to do with the spirit of Sumak Kawsay or “Buen Vivir”.

agreed in the new Constitution (2008), which promote competition before cooperation, and which relegate attention to learning itself; and

d) the fact that Ecuador already participates in an international comparative evaluation, at the Latin American level: the one carried out by the Latin American Laboratory for Evaluation of the Quality of Education (LLECE), coordinated by the UNESCO Regional Office, closer and more relevant to this region than the OECD PISA test, and which does not establish rankings. (See in this blog: Latin America and LLECE tests).

Bárbara Figueroa, director of the Department of Education of the College of Teachers of Chile, criticized the PISA test because it uses instruments and measures issues "outside the Chilean educational reality."

"What are the skills for the future that interest PISA?" He asked. "Do we measure creativity or adaptation to the neoliberal model of our young people?"

"It is intended to present standardization under the guise of objectivity when the truth is that deep down it conceals the claim to hegemonize, through its measurement, the values of a certain society. Why not observe the development of emotions, the interrelation capacities, the creativity of young people in their cultural and social context? "

She also highlighted that the national press highlights the low performance of young Chileans

compared to other countries worldwide, but does not say that Chile obtains the best learning results in the Latin American context, according to the tests of the Latin American Laboratory for Quality Assessment of Education. OTRAEDUCACION BLOG (Document retrieved on 3/31/2021).

Statement from the CLACSO Working Group. Not to PISA. For an evaluation in the service of an emancipatory education.

In Salvador, Bahia, Brazil (August 11-12, 2014, at the meeting of the Working Group of CLACSO (Latin American Council of Social Sciences) "Educational Policies and the Right to Education in Latin America and the Caribbean", a large group of intellectuals linked to CLACSO expressed their opposition to PISA, highlighting seven points:

- "a) The assumptions that support the evaluation device according to which a good education is one that confirms the acquisition of presumably universal, objective and apolitical knowledge, transmitted by teachers, acquired by students and measured by the Ministry.
- b) The supposed identity between the act of measurement and its ability to reflect the learning processes and their improvement. Technocratic glances suggest that evaluation is an end in itself. We argue, on the contrary, that it is a means that can contribute to improving pedagogical practices.
- c) Its status as a "unique and unappealable measurement device", homogeneous, standardized, which operates by promoting competition, classification and hierarchical labeling based on the publicity of the scores. As multiple investigations show, the application of the device is causing the standardization of teaching practices in order to achieve better performance in tests.

- d) The relationship between the use of the device and teaching working conditions, as it imposes guidelines and incentives for performance, increasing the precariousness, intensification and impoverishment of teaching work.
- e) The impact of this pedagogy of the correct answer on the subjectivity of teachers, students and families who live in constant pressure for performance. The PISA tests - and their national variants - affect the desire to teach and learn.
- f) The commercialization that the creation of a globally managed device supposes, while deepening a logic of transnational educational financing in the key of profit. The circle closes with the outsourcing of the design and application of the evaluation through the contracting of private agencies.
- g) The association between the application of tests and the evaluation of the quality of education, while the concept of educational quality is not univocal; it is embedded in a complex network of historical, social and political significance. We also question the validity of the PISA tests and their results to understand and solve the problems of public schools in Latin America and the Caribbean concerned with ensuring the right to education. "

October 2014. OTRAEDUCACION BLOG (Document retrieved on 3/31/2021).

Meeting in Uruguay on June 14, the ministers of education of MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market, a subregional bloc created in 1991, made up of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, and as Associated States: Chile, Colombia, Peru , Ecuador, Guyana, and Suriname) wrote and sent a letter to Andreas Schleicher, director of PISA, raising various concerns and the need to "Latin Americanize" PISA.

Highlights on the letter:

1. The particularities of Latin America and its 15-year-old students, subjects of the evaluation (including the problem of school backwardness and high dropout rates).
2. The discrepancy with the rankings and the concern with the presentation and dissemination of the results in this way.
3. The proposal to include in the tests "situations appropriate to the life contexts of young people in the region."
4. The need to diversify the test application software in digital mode, including free software.

April 2014. OTRA EDUCACION BLOG (Document retrieved on 3/31/2021).

EXIT PISA, Pablo Gentili, Blog Contrapuntos, El País, November 11, 2014.

The article developed the proposal to "get out of PISA" made at the national meeting in Buenos Aires (October 30-31). The approach extends beyond Argentina, to the other countries in the region that have been participating in PISA. Reviews and questions university rankings and ranking culture applied to education in general, including PISA. It reviews some criticisms made of PISA by various actors: the letter sent to Schleicher by the group of intellectuals and academics from various universities in the North, the Statement of the CLACSO Working Group, and the article by Rosa María Torres in Ecuador.

The evaluation of educational quality in Latin America, emancipatory models under construction, SITEAL Dialogues, Buenos Aires, nov. 2014.

"PISA is the most complex expression of this great architecture for measuring the quality of education. There are simpler systems but also structured from the premise that quality can be measured thanks to the use of indicators derived from the learning of students in some moment of their school history. From there emanate a series of conclusions, of great normative power,

that indicates the path that educational systems must follow to improve their quality. Rankings and reports are elaborated based on these assumptions ".

November 2014. OTRA EDUCACION BLOG (Document retrieved on 3/31/2021).

*The Position of EDUCA in the Dominican Republic regarding PISA Tests.*

EDUCA's Technical Opinion. The results are not surprising. They are consistent with the professional and rigorous measurements that the Ministry of Education has been sharing with society. One cannot fall into despair, but even less into complacency and inaction. Resources are necessary. But as EDUCA warned from the beginning, they are not by themselves a guarantee of a solution to the problems of the quality of Dominican education, which are structural and reach all socio-economic and cultural levels of the country. It is also a signal for the political and technical authorities of the Government and the Ministry of Education, who are making every effort to improve the current situation, so that they understand that it will be necessary to dare to innovate and try different solutions to those practiced since 2013. Solutions that do not They are giving positive results neither in the Dominican Republic nor in the entire Region.

Andreas Schleicher, responsible for the PISA tests, commented this morning that teacher motivation and professionalism continues to be a key to keep in mind as it explains better results. However, in contexts such as the Dominican Republic in which the levels of teaching excellence barely reach 3% according to the data from the last performance evaluation, the need to comprehensively review the management model of the Dominican school seems rather indicated. and of this in the relationship with the whole of the educational system, including of course the role, professionalism and dignity of the teaching function. The Exponential Schools model that has begun to be designed in the recent edition of the International Congress of "I learn" Education and that will soon be presented to the education authorities and the President of the

Republic, is presented as an opportunity for change, rigorously designed, and adjusted to methodological standards capable of evaluating and measuring its impact before spreading to the entire system. The PISA report is comprehensive and rich in information and data. EDUCA will continue to review and analyze the information to share its findings with the community.

(EDUCA, 2001). One thing that can be pointed out about EDUCA position on the PISA Tests, it is that unlike their South-American counterparts, they do not reject the country participation in continuing taking the test, but they only put on the table a solution which they think will solve the issues of the Dominican Education System and it is the creation of the so-called ***Exponential Schools***.

*Another Measurement on the Quality of the Dominican Education System, the EF EPI*

Since the PISA Tests do not examine the degree of success pertaining foreign languages education, despite its being a fundamental and important part of any country advancements, it is imperative that we analyze that variable of the educational system in our country, due to the fact that the English Language has become a major factor of success in our society and along with the CIT have become not only a symbol for modernizing the country, but an indispensable combination to elevate the productivity in different areas of our economical system, as well as, the key for globalization and of Internationalization. One of the program that exists in this country it is the English Immersion Program for Competitiveness sponsored by the Ministry of Higher Education –MESCYT- since 2005, and as part of the broadly announced success of that program for high school graduate and College students, has been the measurement of the advancements of English in the Dominican Republic and which has placed the situation of the English Language teaching/ learning process and proficiency in the #48 place out of 100 countries of the world (48/100), and although the country's classification is LOW, they still place

it as Seven out of 19 Latin American Countries (7/19). The EF EPI totals 499 for us., a rather better classification if compared with the disastrous classifications of the PISA Test, which located use only a spot above the Philippines.

### *The Outcomes of EF EPI for the Year 2020*

The Netherlands has overtaken Sweden to be back in pole position as the nation with the most proficient English speakers in the world. It was also in pole position [in 2016](#) and each year sees a jostling of position among Scandinavian countries for the top spot.

But in other regions, results are somewhat sporadic. For example, in Europe, France's scores have improved for the past two years, but Spain and Italy still lag behind the rest of the EU in terms of average scores.

The scores are achieved through analysing results from 2.3 million adults who took an online English test in 2018 via EF Standard English Test ([EF SET](#)).

#### **Very High Proficiency**

01	Netherlands	70.27
02	Sweden	68.74
03	Norway	67.93
04	Denmark	67.87
05	Singapore	66.82
06	South Africa	65.38
07	Finland	65.34
08	Austria	64.11
09	Luxembourg	64.03
10	Germany	63.77
11	Poland	63.76
12	Portugal	63.14
13	Belgium	63.09
14	Croatia	63.07

The Netherlands reached 70.27 on the index while the country with the lowest proficiency, Libya, scored just 40.87. Sweden dropped to second place with a score of 68.74. In Latin America, the region's two most populous countries, Mexico and Brazil, experienced slight declines in scores. Other Latin American countries, many of which have invested heavily in teacher training in recent years, are at last seeing real improvement, the report notes.

English proficiency in Asia declined slightly compared with last year, with over half the countries surveyed registering a lower score. However China made gains, moving from the 'low' band to 'moderate' proficiency for the first time.

Authors of the EPI also found a correlation between high English proficiency and various indicators of economic competitiveness, including higher income and increased labor productivity.

This is a network effect, noted co-author, Kate Bell.

And while observing that any ranking can create a feeling of competition, she counselled, “there is not, in fact, a limited supply of English and countries do not need to compete to get it. On the contrary, the more countries (and people) learn English, the more useful English becomes.”

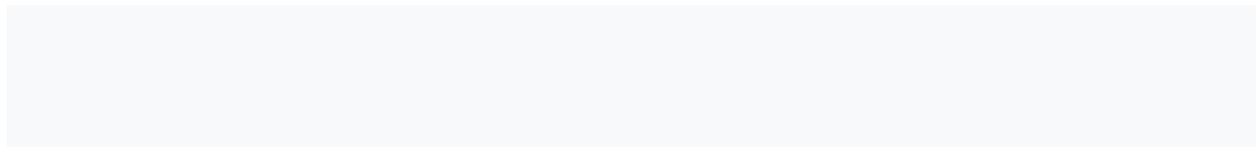
This year saw a 77% increase in test takers since last year. Eight new countries were included in the survey including Bahrain, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Paraguay, and Sudan. Africa’s average proficiency score dropped, primarily due to score changes in South Africa and Ethiopia and to the inclusion of Sudan and Cameroon which both fall in the ‘very low’ proficiency band.

With an EPI average score of 44.60, the Middle East was the region with the lowest English proficiency. This year’s report showed that the Middle East is continuing to fall further behind other regions.

## Another key finding of the report was that the English proficiency gender gap is closing

Another key finding of the report was that the English proficiency gender gap is closing. Last year women’s average English level was higher than men’s worldwide and in a majority of countries. But this year women outscored men by less than one point in Africa, Asia and Europe. In Europe, men outperformed women in more than half the countries in the region, and by significant margins in Denmark and Romania.

In Latin America, men’s scores were higher than women’s for the first time and in the Middle East, men’s average score continued to outpace women’s by a significant margin. While that potential has not yet been fully realised, the EPI also found consistent correlations between English proficiency and measures of technology adoption, such as secure servers per capita, information and communication technology (ICT) exports, and broadband subscriptions. **Source: EF EPI 2020 REPORT.**





### Chapter III: Research Design

#### *A Comparison between the Two Assessments Tools to our Educational System*

In order to have a clear idea of what a Comparison or a Comparative Method is, let's examine some definition of a Comparative Method "Comparative research, simply put, is the act of comparing two or more things with a view to discovering something about one or all of the things being compared. This technique often utilizes multiple disciplines in one study". ( - SSRN Papers <https://papers.ssrn.com> › sol3 › Deliver. 2021), another definition worth of being quote is offered as follows "There are several methods of doing comparative analysis and Tilly (1984) distinguishes **four** types of comparative analysis namely: individualizing, universalizing, variation-finding and encompassing (p. 82). Adding to the types of comparative analysis, May (1993, as cited in Azarian 2011, p11.) According to Pickvance (2005), comparative analysis is conducted mainly to explain and gain a better understanding of the causal processes involved in the creation of an event, feature or relationship usually by bringing together variations in the explanatory variable or variables. Comparative research can be traced to a long history that has gained much attention in current research due to globalization, technological advances, etc. on cross-national platforms (Azarian, 2011). Conventionally, comparative analysis emphasized on the "explanation of differences, and the explanation of similarities" (p.2). This helps to establish relationships between two or more phenomena and provide valid reasons. Comparisons are now carried out on various levels being regional, national or wider geographical boundaries based on specific subject or area of interest.

#### *The Questionnaire as a Tool for Research Conducting*

One Questionnaire was designed out of the two reports, in order to interview the students that conform the three sections of advanced student's virtual modality classes at UASD Graduate Program (A Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages) for the Midterm period of the present Semester (2021-10) during the times of the still prevalent pandemic.

### *Population*

The three Advanced English Sections totaled 100 students of which fifty percent of them (50%) were called to complete the open –questions questionnaire, regarding their view points on the topics related to the PISA Tests and that of the EF EPI classification, among other topics.

### *The Process of Investigation and Data Gathering*

Two readings related to this investigation were delivered to the students, each of them containing their respective questionnaires (See appendix) in order to disclose the answers to these open questions and for further converting into data.

### *The Randomization Method*

Randomization is an experimental technique for assigning subjects to different treatments (or no treatment). The idea behind randomization is that because the treatment allocation is random, then the attributes and characteristics of the groups for the different treatments will be more or less equivalent, so that any effect observed between the treatment groups may be related. directly with the effect of the treatment and is not a characteristic of the individuals in the group.

In the experimental design, the random assignment of participants to treatment experiments and control groups helps to ensure that differences between and within groups are not systematic from the beginning of the experiment. Randomization does not guarantee that the groups are "matched" or equivalent, only that the differences are due to chance. In such a way, participants were chosen on the basis of a third participant, that is to say, counting up to three and choosing or selecting a student from the rows in the classroom, but for determining the number of students to be chosen a table was used. (a Question Pro digital tutorial), and that according to that table, it was 81 students out of 100. This table assumes a 95% confidence level, identifying a risk of 1 in 20. This real error is greater than the margin of error (greater than 5%).

The base sample size must be increased to account for a possible non-response.

A 5% error rate indicates the willingness to accept an estimate within  $\pm 5$  of the given value.

When the population calculated with the lowest attribute or concept is less than 10 percent, the sample needs to be larger.

The normal population assumption is inadequate for 5% precision levels when the population is 100 or less. (Question Pro, 2021).

## Chapter IV: Results and Conclusions

### *Overview*

The process of undertaking the investigation was as follows: The students were given three (3) documents at all, two of them on the PISA Test: a) The letter addressed by more than 100 Scholars to Dr. Andreas Schleicher and posted on the Guardian (2014), b) The Document published in the country by EDUCA (2018), commenting the results obtained in 2018, and c) The Report published by Education First on the English Proficiency Index (2020). They were given three weeks for reading and discussing and further investigating those documents on the premise or guidelines of the questionnaire supplied to them by the teachers and whose reports were to be discussed in their respective classes as a part of the midterm assessments activities.

### *Gender of the Population*

Of the 81 students randomly selected out of the 100 that composed the three Advanced English Section at UASD University (Virtual classes), 72% were female students and 24% were male ones, only 4% of them did not respond to a gender specification. That is the gender composition that currently reveals the proportion of female/male college students in our campuses.

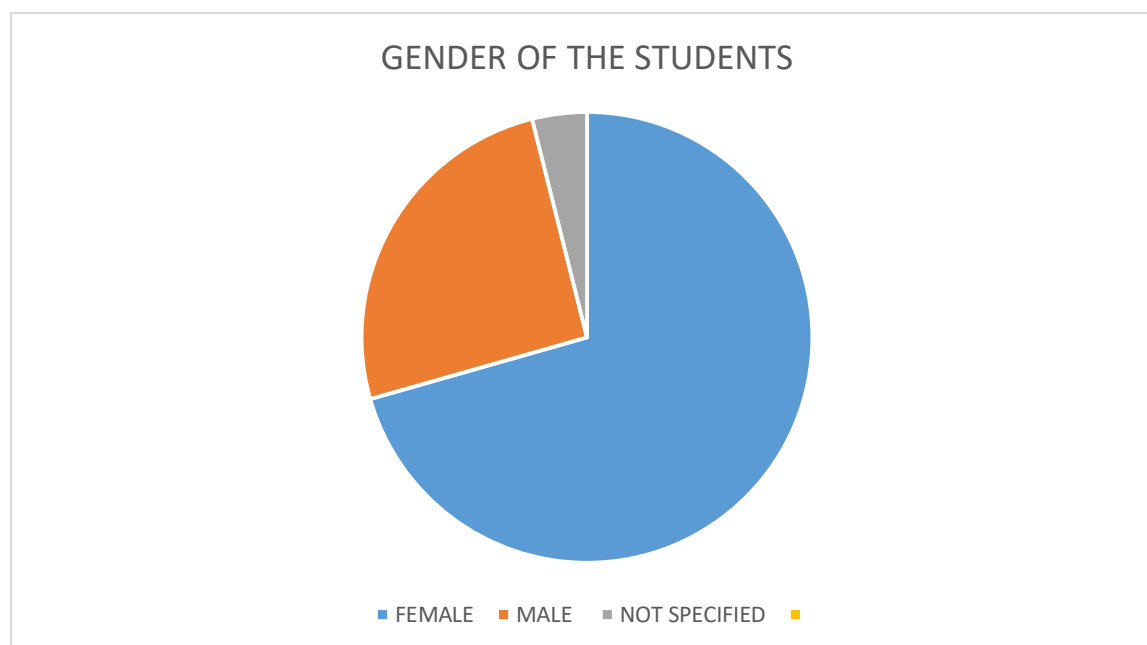


Figure # 1 Shows the proportion of students according to gender distribution.

Figure # 1 Shows the proportion of students according to gender distribution and which is the real situation for most of the careers offered by this university, and not only to our graduate program on foreign languages (A Bachelor's Degree on Foreign or Modern Languages), something which is noticeable in public and private universities and higher education institution of the Dominican Republic.

### *Research Questions Discussion*

The results of the application of the questionnaire were as follows:

#### 1.-Research Question #1:

-What are the so-called PISA Tests, and how they have influenced the Education System?

It was not surprising for us that most of the students knew before hand of the existence of that battery of test and of their influenced on educational policy making and proposals in our country due to the high publicity that accompany the posting of the results of the PISA Tests in national and international newspapers and magazines as well as, in blogs and social forums. As a matter of fact more than 98% of the students interviewed revealed an ample knowledge on this matter, and expressed their concerns for both the disastrous results obtained in 2018, and for the criticism and rejections that the PISA Tests are provoking all over the world, including the Dominican Republic.

#### 2.-Research Question #2:

-Why does PISA Tests not measure the teaching/learning process of English?

100% of the interviewed students knew that PISA Tests does not measure the level or the degree of success of the English language in our country, but they had no answer why, and simply referred to the three areas of education where PISA Tests is assessing our educational system in general.

#### Research Question #3:

-What is the EF Index of Proficiency in English, and what is its importance to our country?

Of the total of students interviewed only 26% knew of the existence of that indexation to our country, and rather have a vague idea of it. Still more, some 48% knew better of the TOEFL Test and 19 % of the Teaching Knowledge Tests –TKT- (Cambridge English) in the field of foreign language measurements (mostly English) in general, and widely used in College education and for international study purposes.

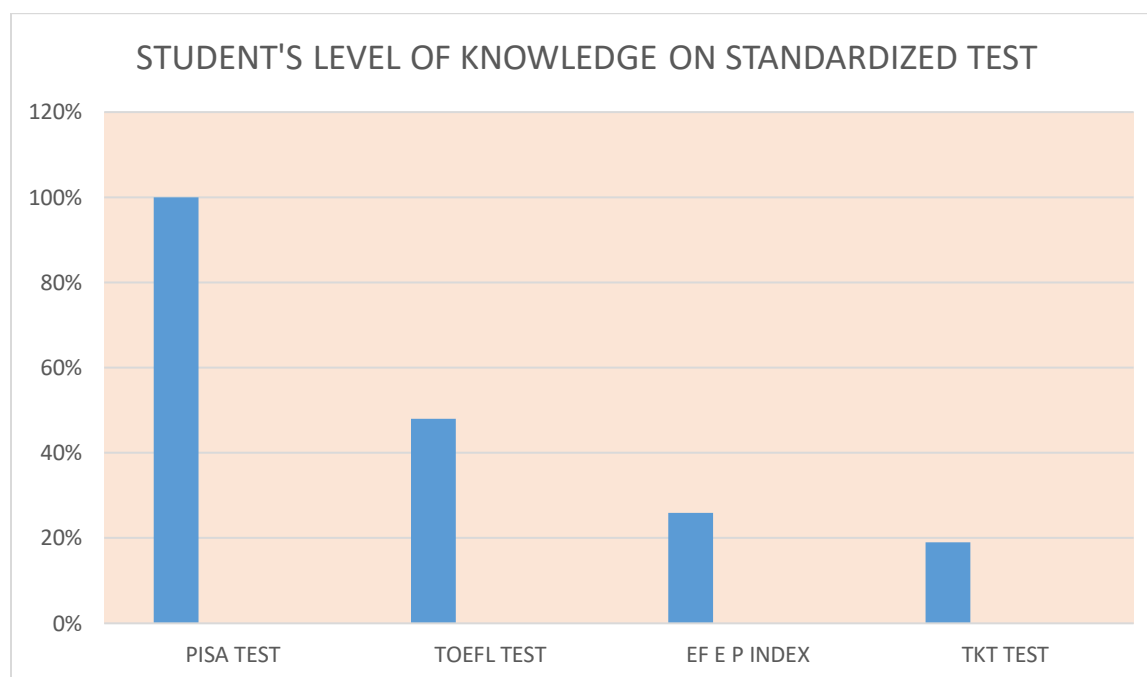


Figure #2 reveals the Level of knowledge of Students on International Standardized Tests.

#### Research Question #4.-

-What are the so-called Structural Issues of our Educational System?

By structural Issues, problems, difficulties and inefficacies of the Dominican Educational System are defined the calamities that have historically accompanied the very basis of our education since the foundation of the republic (1844), and affect the outcomes of it.

The structural difficulties of the Dominican Educational System are basically the same that affect the other countries of the region (South America and the Caribbean), something which is highlighted in the PISA Results for the year 2018. More than 76% of the students interviewed recognized or identified as “Structural Problems” as those that form part of the skeleton or body of our system. They agreed on a series of permanent parameters like:

#### *Poverty and Social Inequities:*

Although the Central Bank of the Dominican Republic, classified us as a country with an acceptable level of development according to the so-called Human Development Index (HDI), which is a synthetic measure used to assess long-term progress in three dimensions basic human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a standard of living worthy.

The indicator used to measure a long and healthy life is life expectancy. The level of Knowledge is measured through the mean years of schooling among the adult population, that is, the average years of schooling received throughout life by 25-year-olds or more; and access to learning and knowledge, through the expected years of schooling of children of starting school age, which is the total number of years of schooling that can be expected to receive a child of that age if current patterns of enrollment rates by age are maintained throughout the child's life. The standard of living is measured by gross national income (GNI) per capita, expressed in 2017 international dollars converted using the rates of conversion of purchasing power parity (PPP).

In order to ensure the maximum possible comparability across countries, the HDI is primarily based on international data from the United Nations Population Division (data on expectation of life), the Institute of Statistics of the United Nations Educational Organization, the Science and Culture (data referring to the average years of schooling and the number of years expected schooling) and the World Bank (GNI per capita data). As indicated in the introduction, the HDI values and rankings presented in this year's report are not comparable with those of previous reports due to the reviews carried out in the different indicators that compose it. To enable the evaluation of progress on HDIs, the Human Development 2020 includes a new calculation of the HDI corresponding to the period from 1990 to 2019 using consistent data series.

#### Value and classification of the HDI of the Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic's HDI in 2019 was 0.756, which places the country in the development category.

And in 88th place out of 189 countries and territories. It occupies the same position in the ranking as Azerbaijan. Between 1990 and 2019, the Dominican Republic's HDI increased from 0.599 to 0.756, an increase of 26.2%.

Pursuant to the HDI indicators: Between 1990 and 2019, life expectancy at birth in the Dominican Republic increased by 7.5 years, Average years of schooling increased by 3.2 years and expected years of schooling increased by 2.7 years. The per capita GNI of the Dominican Republic grew by around 196.1% between 1990 and 2019. (PNUD, 2020).

That is the official report of those supranational organizations, but despite that, poverty is a very ostensible situation, and even more than poverty of the Dominican population, that phenomenon is increasing due to the immigration of Hundreds of Thousands or maybe millions of illegal Haitian citizen to this country.

#### *Lack of an Appropriate Educational Budget for a Very Prolonged Time*

It was not after 22 years of approving the Law 66-97 that the Dominican Republic allocated only 4% of the gross domestic product (GDP) to pre-university education. The most convenient, without exaggeration, would be 10%. However, it is pertinent to ask: what have the DR \$ 936,428.9 million used by the Ministry of Education since 2013, the year in which the application of Law 66-97 began? Almost DR \$ 936,429 million to date, if the budget programmed for 2019 is included, which amounts to RD \$ 170,570.2 million.

For a better understanding, the General Budget Office explains it with sufficient clarity: for every RD \$ 100.00 paid by the Government in 2019, RD \$ 20.1 would go to education, RD \$ 8.20 would go to health, RD \$ 8.00 to the government administration and RD \$ 7.00 to protection while RD \$ 33.00 would be paid to pay the public debt and the rest, which would be



RD \$ 23.70, corresponds to energy, justice, public order and security, protection of the environment and other economic, social and general services.

But here a questioning arises; Has this expected budget increase served to improve the quality of education in our country? To that respect (EDUCA, 2016) published an study named “Quality of educational spending in the Dominican Republic: An exploratory analysis since the 4% validity”, in which its then president, José Mármol, highlighted that “Dominican society has legitimately considered as his achievement the allocation of 4% of GDP to the pre-university education sector ”.

However, later on he (Marmol) says: “One of the initial acts of the first administration of President Medina was to honor his political and social commitment to the education sector and assign the resources that were established by law to education. 2013 budget grew by 70%, going from RD \$ 58,590 million in 2012 to RD \$ 99,628 million in 2013. This historical growth, unprecedented in the entire life of the Dominican educational system, was accompanied by doubts, on the part of some sectors, on the management and execution capacity of the educational authority ”.

EDUCA, in this same study, points out that the evidence shows that an increase in spending does not necessarily translate into a comprehensive improvement in educational quality. In the case of Latin America, the average public spending on education in 17 countries, as a percentage of GDP, increased from 2.7% in 1990 to 4.3% in 2003. During this period, Primary and Secondary enrollment presented the fastest increase in coverage. However, the quality of learning did not increase in the same proportion. This is evidenced by the low results obtained by the region in the international PISA<sup>1</sup> and TIMSS<sup>2</sup> tests (PREAL, 2006).

But the main problem with EDUCA attitudes it is that, they only criticize the public educational system and have not adopted a critical position to the PISA Tests, as have done educators all over the world, and even worst, they have never ever highlighted the failure of the private sector of our education and picture Dominican teachers as the worst there is in the planet, and also that the remedy they proposed as a *Panacea* for all of our educational evils are their **Exponential Schools**, which up to now have not been explained to the educational community in details, but as a mere proposal from EDUCA, which is, frankly speaking a media attempt to monopolize the attention of the public and that of the authorities toward their means of being a lobbyist of the great entrepreneurship of the country which aim to handle the educational budget for their purposes and interest , as have pointed out some social organizations and unions like the Dominican Association of Teachers (A.D.P.), and others scholars and progressive unions.

#### *Lack of an Appropriate National Curricula*

To that respect only the opinion of the Dominican Association has been heard up to now, regarding the nonexistence of an appropriate National Curriculum, and that the educational authorities have spent the new budget (4% of the Grass Income) in building new schools all over the country, but have not dedicated their best efforts for producing good teachers, and for appropriating the current curriculum according to the modern demands of today's society.

#### *Lack of Facilities*

Lack of facilities in schools such as lack of electricity, over populated classroom, insecure school centers, adequate bathrooms for students and teachers and the technological and logistical resources like functional laboratories necessary to implement a quality teaching, if not world class, but at least of a quality acceptable to what is the region of South American and the Caribbean. In all of the above considerations and in that respect the opinion of the students

interviewed (answering the questionnaire) are as follows: Poverty and Social Inequities 68%, Lack of an Appropriate Education Budget 20%, Lack of an Appropriate National Curriculum 35%, Lack of facilities at schools 82%, Incapable School Administrators & Unprepared Teachers 34%.

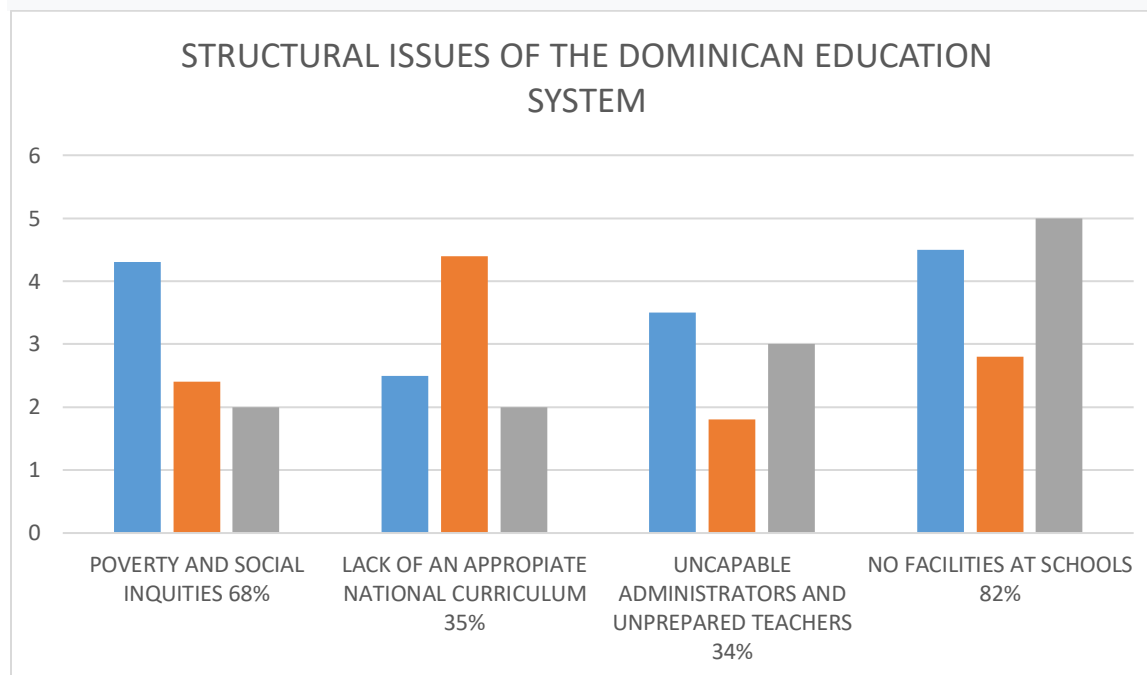


Figure # 3 shows the Structural Problems/Issues of the Dominican Educational System.

Research Question #5.-

-What are the so-called Conjuncture Issues of our Educational System?

To most of the students interviewed (98%) the main factor affecting education, but life as well, it is the Covid 19 Pandemic in this specific conjuncture, they did not leave space of thinking in anything more than that, although some other 90% considers the Haitian immigration problem as being both Structural/Conjunctural Issue as well, since the National State is being forced to auxiliate those immigrants and providing them Housing, Education, Health and Work, and even Documentary Legalization, due to a responsibility not assumed by the Haitian Government, it is like a poor country carrying the heavy burden of another poorer country.

Research Question #6-

-What type of solutions are the Non-governmental organization putting on the table?

The solutions for solving the problems of education are mainly proposed in two different ways or manners and consist of: a) The creation of Exponential Schools as suggested by EDUCA, Inc. but that is something they have only enunciated in the newspapers and the media, with not specifying the Plans, Objectives in the short or long run and of course, budget. b) Another proposal has been that of Professor Juan Valdez President of TESOL-DR., and consist of implementing Public Bilingual High Schools (Bachillerato Bilingue) in the whole geography of the Dominican Republic. Professor Valdez, who is the proponent of the Bilingual Republic Program, which, as he indicates, has achieved the support of broad sectors of the nation, such as the permanent education commission of the Chamber of Deputies, the Dominican Association of Teachers, sectors of the entrepreneurship and the country's English teachers.

He also stated that “ In order to achieve bilingualism in the Dominican public school system, the participation and support of all actors in society, especially the family, is necessary, not requiring them to know English, but rather, strengthening the school-home connection. and monitoring and supporting the mission of learning English from school”.

“The Bilingual Republic project has been laying the foundations for its development, through 10 years of work in teacher training, the execution of pilot experiences in various provinces of the country and the recruitment of international technical-pedagogical support, for its effective execution. , in Dominican primary and secondary schools, ”Valdez said as he was interviewed in a popular talk show at Radio Z101”. (Z DIGITAL, 2019).

#### Research Question #7

-Is there a need for Bilingual Public High Schools in our Country?

Before presenting the discussion of this question and the answers provided by our students in the pre-cited questionnaire, let us have a clear definition of what a Bilingual High School as defined

as follows “The U.S. Congress in P.L. 95-561, which is known as the Bilingual Act, defines the term program of bilingual education as follows:

*“A program of instruction, designed for children of limited English proficiency in elementary or secondary schools, in which, with respect to the years of study to which the program is applicable . . . there is instruction given in, and study of, English, and, to the extent necessary to allow a child to achieve competence in the English language, the native language of the child of limited English proficiency, and such instruction is given with appreciation for the cultural heritage of such children, and of other children in American society, and with respect to elementary and secondary school instruction, such instruction shall, to the extent necessary, be in all courses or subjects of study which will allow a child to progress effectively through the educational system.*

*The basic definition of bilingual education generally agreed upon by both scholars and laypersons, is the “use of two languages as media of instruction.” In other words, there is agreement regarding what the process of bilingual education is, but confusion arises when the philosophy and goals of bilingual education are discussed. (Appendix B provides a checklist for effective bilingual programs.*

### **What Are the Goals of Bilingual Education?**

*Bilingual education can be organized into the following four categories: cognitive development, affective development, linguistic growth, and cultural enrichment.*

*Blanco (1977) notes that the consensus of experts in the field of bilingual education is that its primary goals are in the area of cognitive and affective development rather than linguistic and cultural realms. From this, one could surmise that the primary goal of bilingual education is not necessarily to teach English or a second language, but to teach children concepts, knowledge, and skills through the language they know best and reinforce this information through the second language. Anderson and Boyer (1970, pp. 43–44) emphasize this strategy in their definition of bilingual education:*

*[Bilingual education is a] new way of conceiving the entire range of education especially for the non-English child just entering school. Bilingual learning necessitates rethinking the entire curriculum in terms of a child's best instruments for learning, of his readiness for learning*

*various subjects, and his own identity and potential for growth and development”*, cited by Malarz, (2020).

The implementation of a nation-wide Bilingual High Schools for the public system, as it is the intention of Professor Valdez, requires a very intricate and rigorous plan in which the availability of thousands of Bilingual Teachers is a must; regardless the budgetary requirements for taking into action such a beautiful project, which no doubt whatsoever will change the history of education in our country and will send an unprecedented message from the Dominican Republic not only to the region (South America and The Caribbean) , but to the rest of the world. A very prudent plan would be in the opinion of experts in education, that such an ambitious project must have to begin within the practical framework of a “Pilot Plan” where it can be put into action with a minimum of possible risks. The questionnaire submitted to our students in this sense, harbored all kind of welcoming vows! (100%), since it is of course, the expression of approval of a population of future professionals wanting to put into practice the abundant knowledge gained in the classrooms as well as, the opportunity of making a productive career, as it is the aim of every young professional in any field. So as they see it, the need for Bilingual Public High Schools in this country, is a revolutionary and creative idea which in contrast of the educational model proposed by the counterpart (EDUCA, Inc.), where not even English is mentioned and where also the treatments or plans for the CIT’S are not clearly explained or mentioned, either.

### *Conclusions*

A common and generalized belief, widely spread within the educational community of any country (and the Dominican Republic is not an exception), it is to take things for granted when it comes to rely on certain standardized tests and measurements results, without repairing in the fact the economical and commercial or other interests behind them, like the case of the denounced PISA Tests. And that usually happens because in any society of every country there are sectors which are in a constant state of controversy and opposing each other in a maniqueist manner, so they easily echo and welcome those “news” as part of their strategy for attacking or

counterattacking the educational authorities, and that mascaraed slips away when in the turn of the *democratic game* the ones who were in the opposition parties when up to occupy positions of authority and viceversa, and as a result of that they who refused the PISA Tests before, are now using those elements as an educational fact in their favor.

The point here to be criticized it is not the so-called *democratic game*, cause up to now democracy is the best option for a country to be lead, not tyranny, but the use of education as a mere tool or instrument to have political gains thus denaturalizing *le champ sacré* of education which should always be far beyond those political or at least party interests, it is not a fair play from our political class.

So, besides that socio-political analysis concerning those standardized tests, mostly the highly rejected one (PISA Tests), from a political viewpoint, to be honest, our point of interest goes now to conclude in the disparities shown in the result of both compared measurement tools (PISA Tests and EF English Proficiency Index) which situates our country educational system in a state of disparity as per the treatment done between those assessment tools, which is reflected in the place given to our country, that it is ranked from a very distant position in the PISA Tests to a good or moderate position reached in the English Proficiency Index, as though, let us say, the reading comprehension skills in a foreign language might not be completely harder and strenuous than the measurement of the reading comprehension skill in their native language

That is a logical question that generally arises when comparing both measurements tools, and to cite just one example. So how comes that our students excel the reading comprehension tests in a foreign language, and cannot perform well in that skill in their native language? If those experts

have the answer, it would be really appreciated and welcomed in the educational community of our country to share it and networked, because that would be one of the rarest cases in the field of foreign language education that the reading-comprehension skill level of a foreign language, in this case English, is superior or higher than that of their own, native language in a given country, in this case, the Dominican Republic.

It is also worth of high lining that this comparison study was conducted mainly between the PISA Test and the English Proficiency Index, not in the light of placing our educational system in one place or the other, but because those results were the only data available to be contrasted and compared, and the imprint of those tests like the TOEFL and the TKT Test, were only measured on the perception of the students taking the questionnaire.



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**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDENTS ON THE PISA TESTS/EF EPI**



UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE SANTO DOMINGO

THE SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Undergraduate Program Advanced English Sections

1.-Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ 3.-I.D. # \_\_\_\_\_

4.-Class Section \_\_\_\_\_ 5.-Professor \_\_\_\_\_

6.-Sex \_\_\_\_\_ 7.-Age \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional)

(Optional)

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PISA TESTS/EF EPI

(Answer these questions with complete ideas and justify your answers as much as possible)

1.-What are the so-called Structural Issues of Dominican Educational System?

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2.-What are the so-called Conjunctural Issues of Dominican Educational System?

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3.-What are the PISA Tests Results for the D.R. in 2018?

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4.-In what position is the Dominican Republic placed, and what in top of the Philipinas? -----

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5.-What type of solution does EDUCA put on the table? Explain.

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6.-What would you prefer, Exponential Schools or Bilingual High Schools?

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7.-Why does PISA Tests not measure Foreign Languages Education in the country?-----

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8.-What other type of assessment/organization different than PISA measures EFL Proficiency in this country ?

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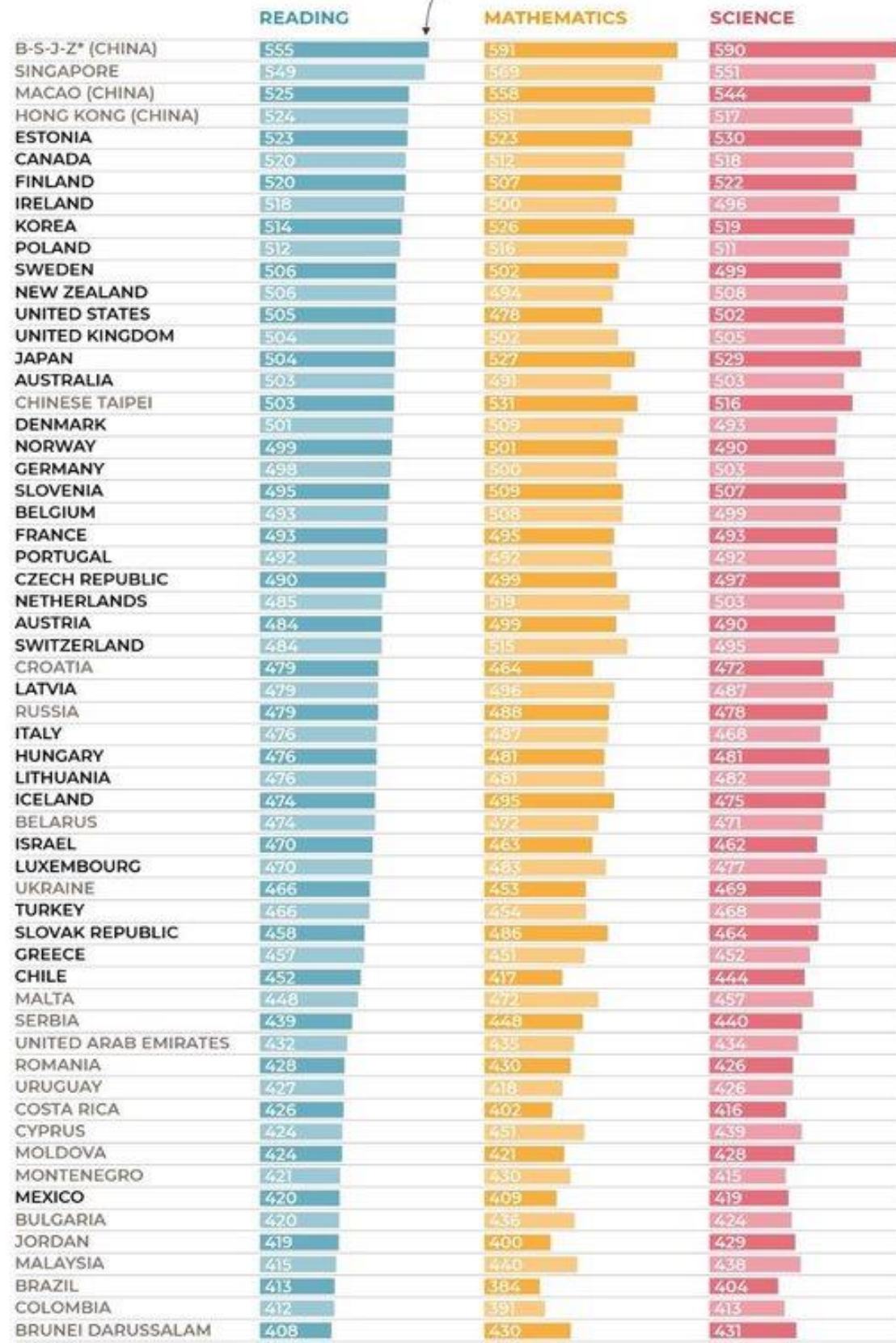
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!!!

**CHARTS OR GRAPHICS OF THE PISA TESTS RESULTS WORLD WIDE  
INCLUDING THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

# PISA 2018 results

Snapshot of students' performance in reading, mathematics and science

Countries are ranked in descending order of the average reading score (focus of PISA 2018)



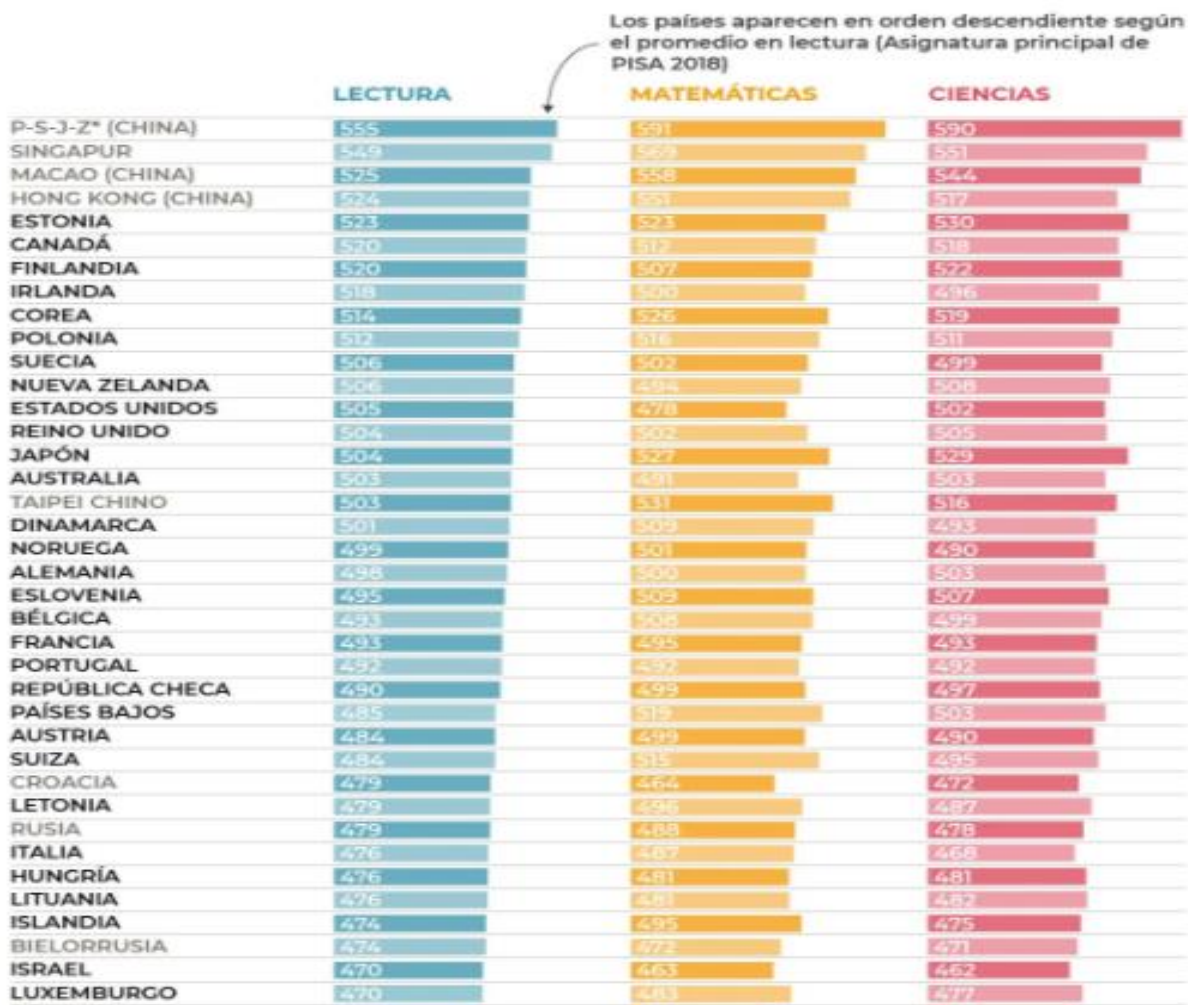


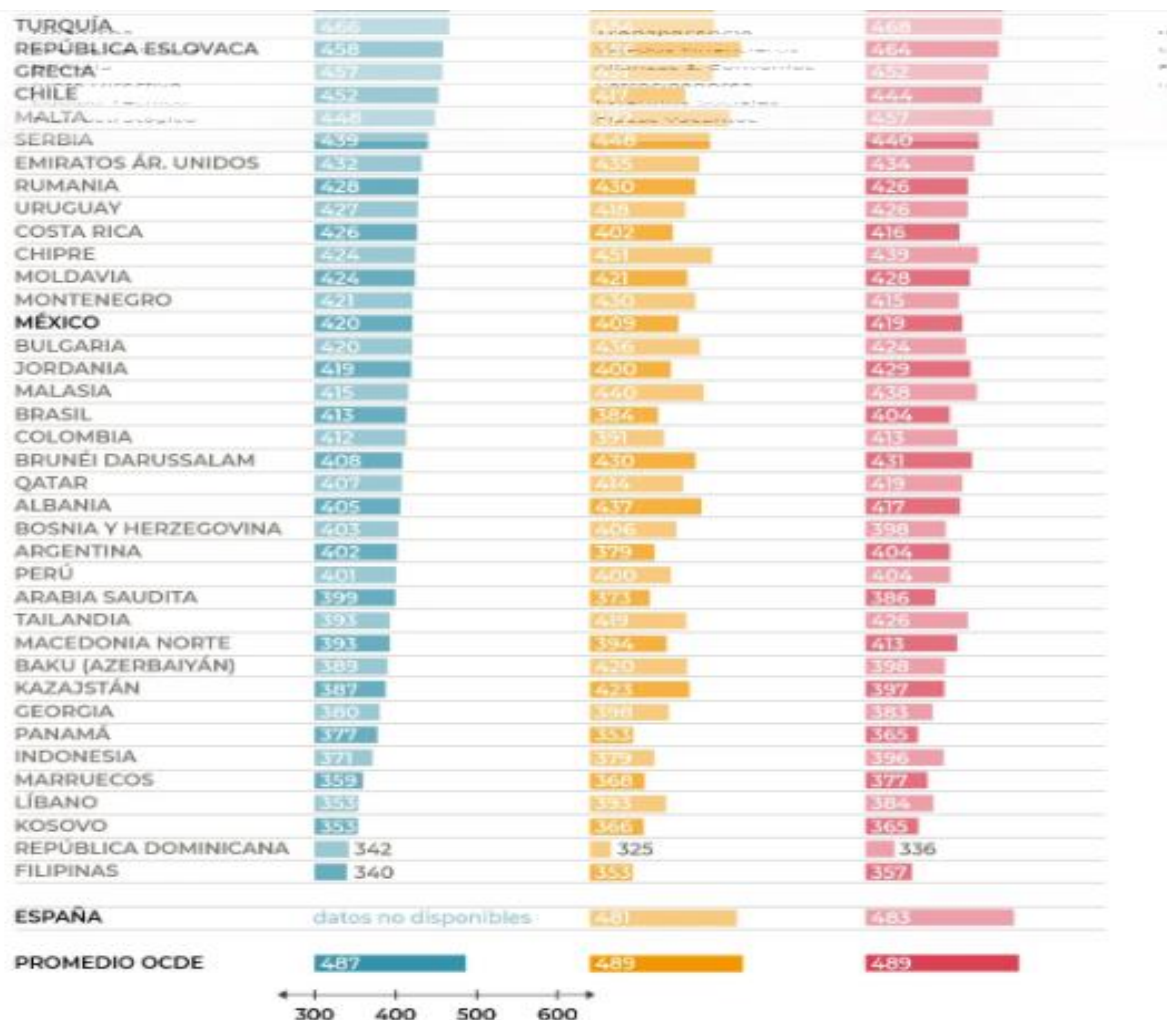
# GRAPHICS ON THE RESULTS OF THE PISA TESTS WORLDWIDE 2018

\*Including the Dominican Republic.

## Resultados PISA 2018

Panorama del rendimiento en lectura, matemáticas y ciencias





Fuente: OCDE, Base de datos PISA 2018 || \*P-S-J-Z : Pekín, Shanghai, Jiangsu y Zhejiang