

Gender inequalities in South African Schools: New Complexities

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Background

- Gender dynamics have changed.
- Consider shifts and complexities of gender in South African education.
- Evidence from recent studies (TIMSS, PIRLS, SACMEQ, NSC).
- Shifts in the nature of conversation and debate on gender and educational outcomes.

International Trends

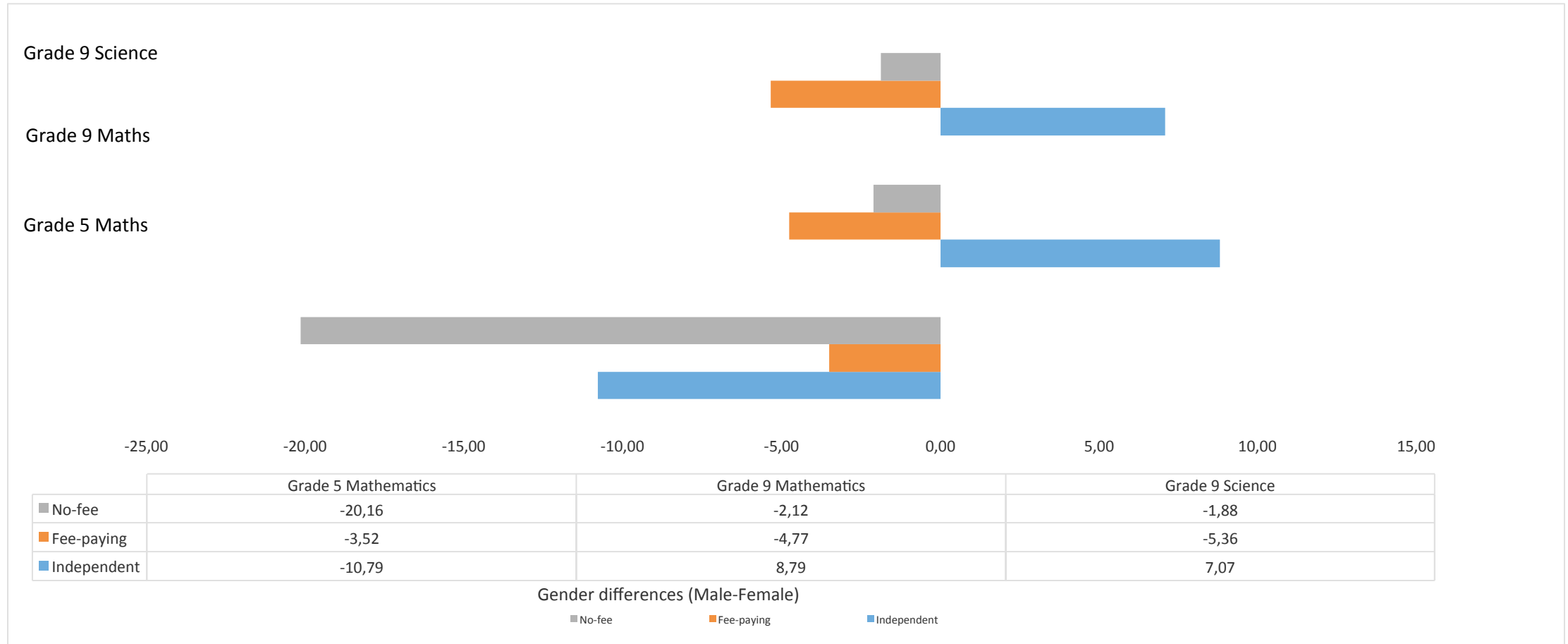
Table 1: Percentage of learners below the TIMSS 400 minimum benchmark, 2015

	Girls	Boys
Grade 5 (mathematics)	58.4	64.1
Grade 9 (mathematics)	64.2	67.2
Grade 9 (science)	66.0	69.4

Source: Mullis et al (2016) - own calculations

Gender and School Type

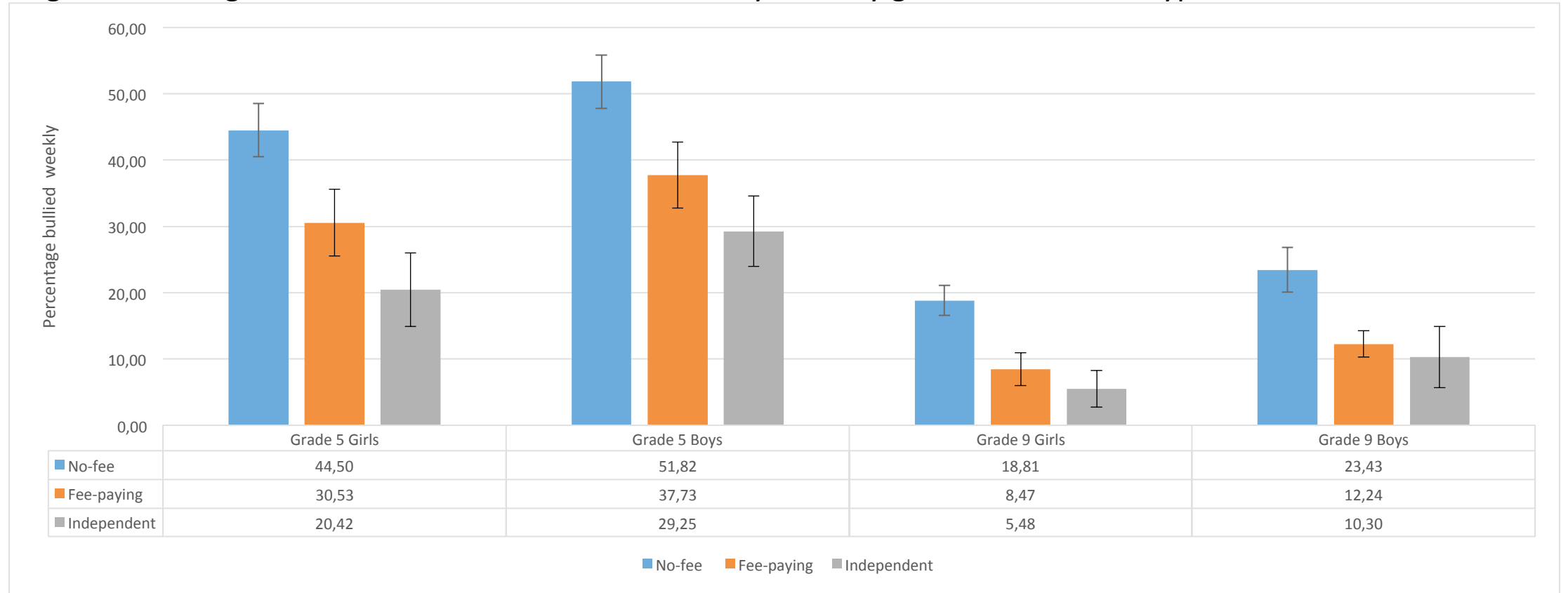
Fig. 1 Gender differences in mathematics and science by school type, TIMSS 2015



Source: Mullis et al (2016)- own calculations

Gender and School Safety

Fig. 2 Percentage learners who are bullied on a weekly basis by gender and school type, 2015



Source: Mullis et al (2016) - own calculations

Sexual Violence in Schools in South Africa (SeViSSA)

- Baseline study monitors sexual violence in schools.
- 24 schools located in Khayelitsha, Western Cape.
- Reports of Sexual Violence:
 - 48% of primary school learners
 - 23% of high school learners been in a romantic relationship.
- Sexual violence perpetrated by both learners and teachers.
 - 35% of learner were perpetrators (both primary and high school)
 - 20% and 13% of teachers were perpetrators (primary school)
 - 13% of teachers were perpetrators

Gender Differences in Educational Attainment

Table 2 Average age of girls and boys, TIMSS 2015

Grade 9	Girls	SE	Boys	SE
No-fee	15.6	(0.04)	16.2	(0.05)
Fee-paying	15.2	(0.05)	15.5	(0.06)
Independent	15.1	(0.05)	15.4	(0.06)
Grade 5	Girls		Boys	
No-fee	11.3	(0.04)	11.7	(0.04)
Fee-paying	11.3	(0.03)	11.5	(0.03)
Independent	11.3	(0.07)	11.4	(0.05)

Source: Mullis et al (2016) - own calculations

Gender Differences in the National Senior Certificate (NSC)

Table 4 NSC Results in Mathematics and Physical Science by gender, 2012 to 2016

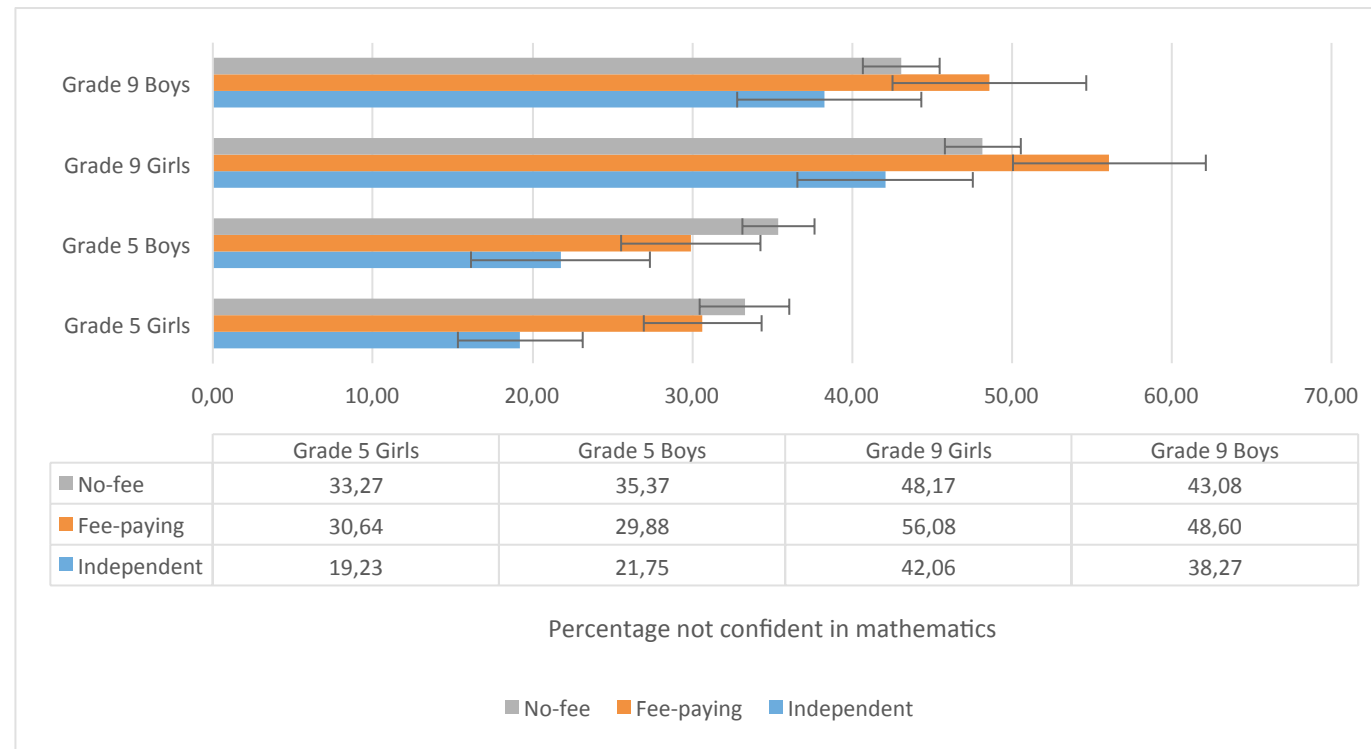
Percentage of candidates who achieved 30% and above

Year	Mathematics			Physical Science		
	Female	Male	(Male-Female)	Female	Male	(Male-Female)
2012	49.2	59.7	10.5	58.9	64.0	5.1
2013	54.3	64.9	10.6	65.7	69.3	3.6
2014	48.6	59.3	10.7	59.1	64.2	5.1
2015	44.2	54.9	10.7	56.4	61.1	4.7
2016	46.4	57.0	10.6	59.6	64.7	5.1

Source: DBE (2016b)

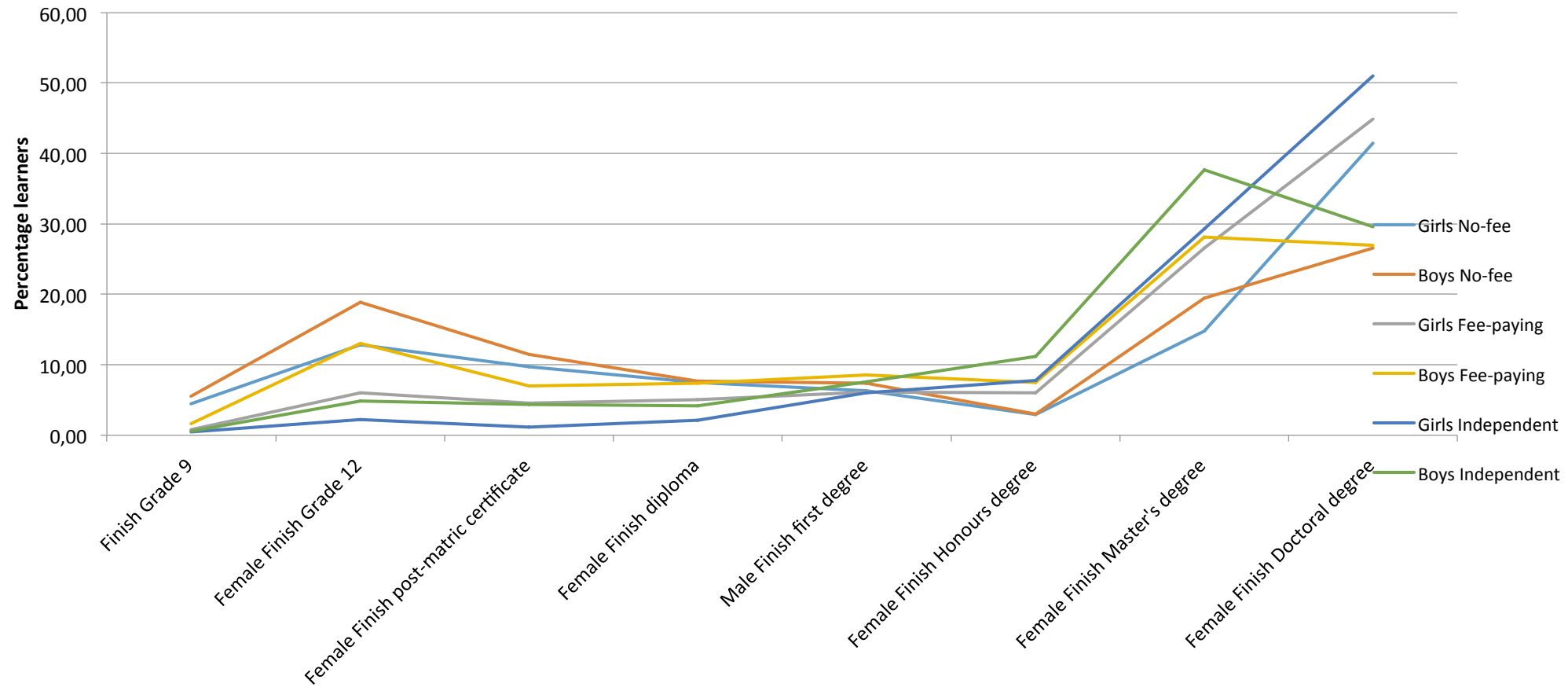
Gender and Confidence in Mathematics

Fig. 3 Confidence in studies by gender and school type, 2015



Source: Mullis et al (2016) - own calculations

Gender and Academic Aspirations



Summary

- Nationally, girls achieved better average results.
- Boys were more likely to be bullied.
- Boys are often overage and greater numbers in secondary school.
- Girls were less confident about their mathematics ability.
- Girls have higher aspirations about pursuing traditional academic careers.

Conclusions

- There is evidence of gender convergence.
- Boys and girls face different challenges throughout their schooling careers.
- There is a case for targeted interventions.