

Article

Creation of Educational Technology Resources to Raise Awareness of Gender Violence Through a Service Learning Project

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Abstract: This contribution is part of the Service Learning (SL) project “Abre tus ojos” (Open your eyes), whose main objective is to contribute to the coeducation and gender violence awareness of future education professionals. In line with the dimensions of sustainable human development, the actions developed in this SL project are directly related to helping people and groups in need. Students from different courses at the Faculty of Education of the University of Burgos have been involved in the training activities of an Association for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (ADAVAS Burgos) through the design of technological educational resources that contribute to raising awareness of gender violence. As a result of the project, a web repository has been created with technological educational resources created by the students (videos, infographics, stories, games). This repository is open access and is presented as a resource contributing to the goal of Sustainable Development Goal (SDP) in relation to gender equality.

Keywords: gender violence; Sustainable Development Goals (SDP); Service Learning (SL); educational technology resources



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1. Introduction

Gender equality and gender-based violence are some of the most relevant social issues of our time, so it is essential that these concepts are addressed in a transversal way in the training of new teachers to improve their knowledge so that it can be passed on to new generations.

1.1. Gender Equality as a Sustainable Development Goal

As explicitly stated by the United Nations (UN) in its Sustainable Development Goal (SDP) number five, the aim is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls [1]. Although, as the UN’s own website states, there is still a long way to go, as it seems impossible to achieve this equality by 2030, given that women currently earn on average 23% less than men worldwide, 70% of caregivers are women, etc. [1]. If we highlight some of the relevant figures, we can see that, according to the United Nations:

- Child marriage would take 300 years to eradicate.
- Discriminatory laws and legal errors that fail to protect women would take over 280 years to be eliminated.
- It would take nearly 150 years to find equal representation in positions of power in the workplace, and nearly 50 years to establish this equality in the global political framework.

Based on the data presented above, and while progress over time has been significant, efforts must be redoubled to fully achieve this goal and achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls around the world [2].

1.2. Gender Violence Approach in Spain

Gender-based violence, including that derived from the new technological realities, aims to place women in a vulnerable position in relation to men, and highlights the fact that today it is no longer only personal, but has also spread through networks, as shown by various studies, including that by Donoso et al. [3].

According to Makepeace [4], around 20% of the university population who took part in his study had been physically assaulted by a partner, and more than half of the sample admitted to knowing someone who had suffered violence at the hands of a partner. We can understand that this problem has been perpetuated for decades, and this is confirmed by analyzing the reality of the figures provided by various studies, which state that this type of violence is increasingly common among young people, a fact that is consistent with data presented at a global and European level, which confirm this trend [5]. In the same vein, other authors state that intimate partner violence among young Spaniards is close to 15% [6]. Similarly, studies such as that by Muñoz-Rivas et al. [7] have shown that 40% of the sample have physically assaulted their partner.

According to the literature, we can affirm that there is a correlation between the duration of the relationship and the presence of physical violence, given that when this type of problem is present, the situation worsens over time [6–8]. We can also highlight that psychological violence often leads to physical violence, as shown in the study by Grana et al. [9], which shows that among the participants in the study, it is reproduced in 67% of cases.

Looking at sexual violence perpetrated by intimate partners, some studies show that around 50% of the sample have perpetrated sexual violence against their partner and more than 50% report having experienced it at some point [10].

In Spain, gender-based violence is recognised as a major social problem, which has led to the implementation of various public policies and legislative measures to prevent and eradicate it. However, the data show that gender violence continues to be a worrying reality, with an increase in cases among the young population and new forms of aggression linked to digital technologies, which demonstrates the need to continue strengthening education and prevention from an early age.

The existence of associations such as ADAVAS Burgos, which provides support to victims, shows the institutional and social commitment to eradicating gender violence. In this context, the “Open Your Eyes” project is in line with the Spanish policy of prevention and awareness-raising, promoting education as a key tool in the fight against this form of violence.

1.3. Service Learning: Open Your Eyes Project

Service Learning (SL) methodology aims to combine students’ learning with the performance of an activity or social commitment that has a positive impact on the community in which they develop [11].

It is conceived as an experiential methodology that combines curricular content with community service in the same process, providing an excellent training scenario that stimulates students to apply the acquired competences in real contexts, giving them a high level of satisfaction [12–14]. This methodology, considered by some authors to be one of the best in higher education [11,15,16], can be defined by three internationally agreed characteristics: service to the community with the intention of improving it, the

active participation of the people involved, and the intentional planning of the curricular objectives and the actions that make up the service [13].

“Open Your Eyes” is a SL project for awareness and prevention of gender violence, carried out at the University of Burgos in collaboration with the Association for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, ADAVAS Burgos [17,18]. This paper presents the results obtained in the first year of implementation, academic year 2022/2023.

The title of the SL project ‘Open Your Eyes’ draws a significant parallel with Alejandro Amenábar’s film “Abre los ojos” (1997), in which the perception of reality and psychological manipulation play a central role. It explores gender-based violence from a psychological perspective, reflecting the danger of possessive relationships and emotional manipulation. As in Amenábar’s film, in which the protagonist must confront his own distorted perception to arrive at the truth, the Open Your Eyes project proposes an awareness-raising process in which both students and the wider community can recognise, understand, and act against gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence is one of the clearest manifestations of inequality and is a serious violation of human rights, sometimes resulting in death. Gender-based violence is any act intended to harm a person because of their gender. Gender-based violence can take many forms (sexual, physical, psychological, domestic, economic) and its consequences are devastating.

At the ADAVAS Burgos association, a multidisciplinary team provides direct care to victims of gender-based violence [18]. Specifically, they provide social care, legal advice and assistance, and psychological support. In addition, training workshops are carried out for professionals as well as prevention and awareness-raising workshops for society as a whole.

The Service Learning project “Open your eyes” aims to involve students from different undergraduate courses at the Faculty of Education of the University of Burgos (Spain) in the training activities carried out by the association ADAVAS Burgos, through the design of teaching materials and resources that contribute to raising awareness of gender-based violence.

To carry out this project, first of all, awareness-raising workshops on gender-based violence will be held by a professional expert on the subject for the different groups of students participating in the different subjects.

After this initial intervention, the students will be divided into working groups to design and create technological and/or audiovisual resources that can be used by ADAVAS Burgos as examples in the training workshops for secondary school students in Burgos.

Throughout the process of creating materials and resources, the teachers and students involved are in contact with ADAVAS Burgos to respond to the needs raised. The design of the resources varies according to the subject and the group of students involved.

Through this SL project, the competences of the degrees and subjects involved will be developed in a transversal way. One of the products expected as a result of this project is the creation of a web repository to store the materials and resources created, in order to give visibility to the project.

In line with the dimensions of sustainable human development, the project has addressed social needs directly related to close assistance to individuals and groups. In particular, it has contributed to raising awareness of gender equality, training and prevention of gender-based violence, recognition of situations of social injustice based on gender, as well as recognition and action in situations of social abuse.

The Service Learning project “Open your eyes” contributes to the achievement of some of the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 5, ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’, in particular [1]:

- Target 5.1: Eliminate all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

- Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other forms of exploitation.
- Target 5.b: Enhance the use of enabling technologies, particularly information and communication technologies, to promote women's empowerment.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Objective

The main objective of the design of this Service Learning project is to develop the personal, social, academic, and professional skills of the students participating in the project and studying at the University of Burgos. Likewise, these actions are guided to collaborate with the ADAVAS Burgos Association (a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of women who have suffered gender violence in the city of Burgos), with the creation of resources to raise awareness and prevent attitudes that perpetuate gender violence.

It also evaluates students' participation in workshops and project activities, as well as their perception of how this project prepares them to deal with gender violence in their future professional practice.

2.2. Sample

The population that participated in this research is made up of students from different courses at the Faculty of Education of the University of Burgos. In total, the sample for this research is made up of 315 people, of which the majority are women (85.8%), compared to men (12.7%) and those who prefer not to state their gender (1.5%), which corresponds to the distribution of the population within the education-related courses at the University of Burgos. Likewise, if we look at the distribution by degree, as can be seen in Table 1, 47.3% belong to the Degree in Primary Education, 33% to the Degree in Early Childhood Education, and 19.7% to the Degree in Education.

Table 1. Distribution of population by level of education and sex.

Degree	Degree in Primary Education		Degree in Early Childhood Education		Degree in Pedagogy		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender								
Woman	117	37.2	98	31.1	55	17.5	270	85.8
Man	28	8.9	5	1.6	7	2.2	40	12.7
I prefer not saying	4	1.2	1	0.3	-	-	5	1.5
Total	149	47.3	104	33	62	19.7	315	100

The activities carried out in the SL project "Open your eyes" are included in the contents and competences of the subjects that are involved in its development. Therefore, the participation of all students enrolled in the participating subjects is encouraged.

The participating students belong to different subjects of the different degrees, which are taught in different courses. Table 2 shows the list of subjects corresponding to each degree, with the year in which they are taught and the University of Burgos reference code.

Table 2. Subject distribution by year and grade.

Degree in Primary Education	ICT in Education (5683) 1st year	101
	Diversity Attention Strategies (5734) 4th year	48

Table 2. Cont.

Degree in Early Childhood Education	ICT applied to education (5751) 1st year	104
Degree in Pedagogy	Television, audiovisual and education (5896) 3rd year	15
	ICT applied to education (5875) 1st year	47
TOTAL		315

2.3. Instruments

To collect data on the prior knowledge of the students from the University of Burgos who wanted to participate in the study, the validated scale “Competences for Educating in Gender Equality” (CEIG), developed by Miralles-Cardona et al. [19], was used. This instrument consists of three factors (knowledge; skills; commitments and attitudes) and is scored on a Likert scale from 1 to 6 (where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree).

In this study, the factor relating to knowledge of gender equality was analyzed. The 12 items included in this factor were as follows

- I1—Gender roles.
- I2—Gender discrimination.
- I3—Gender equality.
- I4—Gender equality.
- I5—Gender stereotypes.
- I6—Gender-related terminology.
- I7—Gender parity.
- I8—Gender bias.
- I9—Distinguishing sex from gender.
- I10—Distinguishing parity from equality.
- I11—Recognizing and identifying gender inequalities.
- I12—Gender legislation.

2.4. Procedure

The research design was carried out in four phases:

1. Prior knowledge of gender equality: First, students completed the CEIG questionnaire (knowledge factor) to analyze their prior knowledge of gender equality.
2. Education and prevention of gender-based violence: Considering prior knowledge, the participating students received training and prevention workshops on gender-based violence given by the association ADAVAS Burgos.
3. Design and creation of educational technological resources on gender-based violence: After the training, the students created educational resources using the “learning by doing” methodology: short didactic videos, multimedia didactic material for direct intervention, and educational infographics.
4. Use and dissemination of the generated resources: The educational technological resources generated will be included in a web repository so that they can be used by the ADAVAS Burgos association in the various workshops given to secondary school students in Burgos and the province in order to raise awareness of gender equality among students. Likewise, this web repository is open access and free for anyone who wants to use it.

3. Results

3.1. Gender Equality Prior Knowledge

First, an initial assessment of the background knowledge of the students participating in the research was carried out. As part of the process of analyzing the students' prior knowledge, the knowledge factor of the "Competences for Gender Equality Education" (CEIG) scale [19] was provided. After analyzing the data obtained, it became clear that within the area of knowledge, a mean score of 3.65 with a Standard Deviation (SD) of 1.330 was obtained, which shows that the students have gender-related knowledge, but that this needs to be complemented by training.

Table 3 shows that the items related to gender parity (2.42), gender bias (2.48), ability to distinguish parity from equality (2.49), and gender legislation (2.71) are the items with the lowest scores in the category analyzed.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations by item of the questionnaire.

Item	Mean	SD
I1—Gender roles	3.84	1.372
I2—Gender discrimination	4.42	1.192
I3—Gender equality	4.04	1.445
I4—Equal opportunities	4.77	1.072
I5—Gender stereotypes	4.42	1.288
I6—Terminology related to gender	3.40	1.299
I7—Gender parity	2.42	1.485
I8—Gender bias	2.48	1.441
I9—The difference between sex and gender	4.37	1.365
I10—The difference between parity and equality	2.49	1.405
I11—Recognise and identify gender inequalities	4.40	1.259
I12—Legislation related to gender	2.71	1.346

Similarly, we can see that the sample participating in the study has higher mean scores on the following items: equal opportunities (4.77), gender discrimination and stereotypes (4.42), recognizing and identifying gender inequalities (4.40), and distinguishing between sex and gender (4.37).

3.2. Training and Preventing Gender-Based Violence

The participating students received awareness-raising workshops on gender-based violence, given by a professional expert in the field from the ADAVAS Burgos association.

The different subjects involved in the project are related to 'Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) applied to Education', 'Television, Audiovisual Media and Education', and 'Strategies for Attention to Diversity' (Table 2), a total of five subjects from different degrees and courses. Therefore, five 2-h training workshops were organized according to the needs of each subject and/or course. These training sessions contributed to raising awareness of gender equality, recognizing situations of social injustice based on gender, as well as recognizing and responding to situations of social mistreatment.

Figure 1 shows pictures of some of the workshops that have taken place, as well as the logo of the Association for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (ADAVAS Burgos).



Figure 1. Images from awareness-raising workshops on gender-based violence organized by ADAVAS Burgos.

3.3. Design and Production of Technological Educational Resources on Gender-Based Violence

After receiving the training, the students carried out the design and creation of technological educational resources on gender-based violence using the “learning by doing” methodology. Learning by doing is an active learning methodology based on experience to assimilate concepts through action. It promotes the acquisition of knowledge, but at the same time allows the development of skills and abilities to solve real problems that the student may encounter throughout his or her life and professional experience.

The students, in working groups (4 or 5 people), designed and created different technological and/or audiovisual resources depending on the subject and degree. Table 4 shows the typology of the technological educational resources created.

Table 4. Typology of educational technology resources created by subject.

Degree in Primary Education	Educational infographics ICT in Education (5683)—1st year
	Multimedia teaching materials Diversity Attention Strategies (5734)—4th year
Degree in Early Childhood Education	Educational infographics ICT applied to education (5751)—1st year
Degree in Pedagogy	Short educational videos (2–3 min.) Television, audiovisual and education (5896)—3rd year
	Educational infographics ICT applied to education (5875)—1st year

During the academic year 2022/2023, a total of 74 technological educational resources on gender violence were created by the participating students from the different subjects and courses. Specifically, they created 54 educational infographics, 15 multimedia teaching materials, and 5 short educational videos. Figures 2–4 show a visual example of some of the educational resources created along with an access link for their visualisation.



Figure 2. Example of an educational infographic created in the SL project “Open your eyes”. https://bit.ly/aps_ejemplo_infografia (accessed on 10 December 2024).

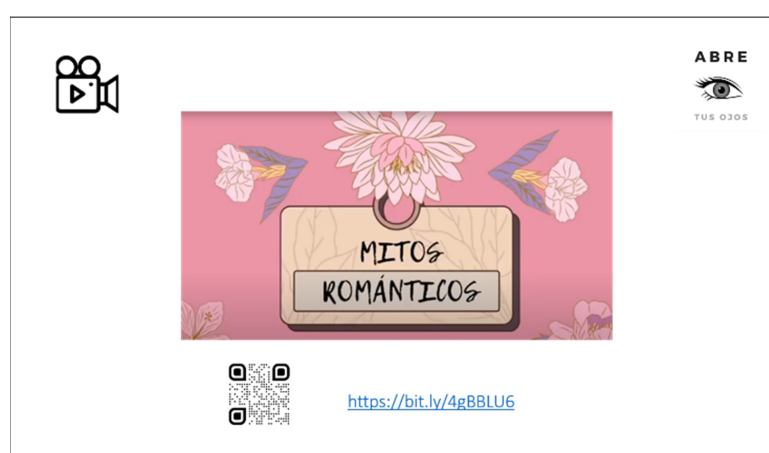


Figure 3. Example of a didactic video created in the SL project “Open your eyes”. <https://bit.ly/4gBBLU6> (accessed on 10 December 2024).



Figure 4. Example of a multimedia teaching material created in the SL project “Open your eyes”. https://bit.ly/aps_ejemplo_material (accessed on 10 December 2024).

In creating the educational technology resources, the students were encouraged to start from their specific interests, i.e., each working group chose the topic of the resource on gender-based violence. This methodology encouraged motivation towards the activity. In general, the students’ attitude towards the development of the project has been good, highlighting their participation and involvement in the ADAVAS Burgos association.

3.4. Educational Technology Resources Utility and Dissemination

Following the completion of the creation of educational technology resources on gender-based violence, and to make the results of the “Open your eyes” project visible, an open-access web repository has been created containing all the materials and resources created since the 2022/2023 academic year. The project’s web repository is available at https://bit.ly/web_APS_AbreTusOjos (accessed on 10 December 2024).

The technological resources created by the students are reviewed in cooperation with the ADAVAS association before they are published in open access.

Figure 5 shows an image of the repository home page and the link to access the repository.

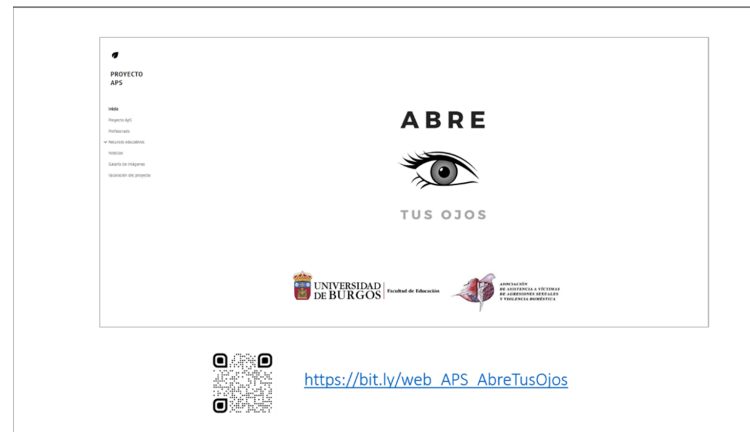


Figure 5. Open access web repository of the SL project “Open your eyes”. https://bit.ly/web_APS_AbreTusOjos (accessed on 10 December 2024).

In addition, to raise awareness and sensitize the university community and all those who wish to take part in this issue, several days of gender violence awareness have been held, all within the framework of the SL project “Abre tus ojos” (“Open your eyes”). In addition, the project has been disseminated through the social network Instagram by the participating students, as well as through the profile of the Faculty of Education of the University of Burgos (@facultad_educacion_ubu) and EDUTIC UBU (@edutic_ubu). As an example, some images of the published content are shown in Figure 6.

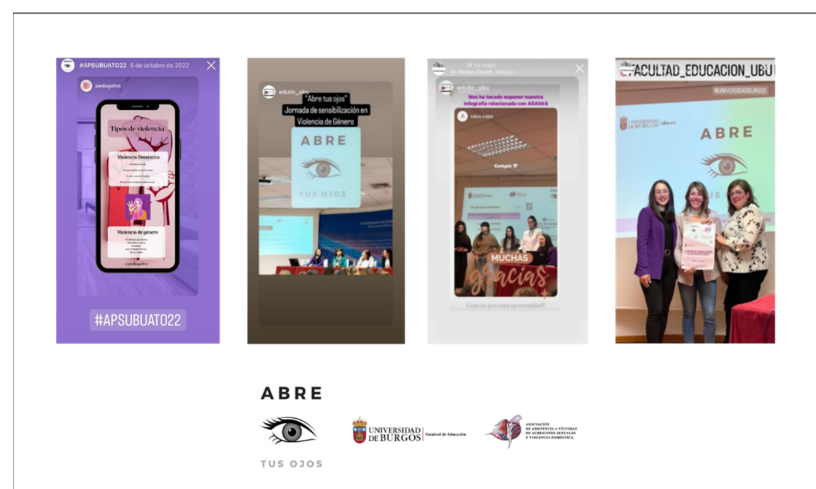


Figure 6. Dissemination of the SL project “Open your eyes” on the social network Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/s/aGlnaGxpZ2h0OjE3OTY5MDI1MjY4ODgxNDUy?igsh=NjFsNnc2N2R4dHd0> (accessed on 10 December 2024).

4. Discussion

As evidenced throughout the article, as well as students' prior knowledge of gender equality, we believe it is necessary for this type of Service Learning project to be implemented transversally in higher education, as we need to promote inclusive and egalitarian education, as advocated by Asadullah et al. [20]. In the same vein, several studies have shown the need to include this type of content in the curriculum, given the limited training in this area in higher education [20–22].

Similarly, the impact of the program on the level of competences of the participating students has been highlighted, as they acquire key competences related to inclusive education, critical reflection, and community values, which is confirmed by studies such as the one carried out by Ribeiro-Silva et al. [22].

With regard to the application of the SL, as demonstrated throughout this article, previous studies show that the implementation of this type of program, based on a participatory methodology, allows the results generated to be of high quality and to effectively fulfil the objective pursued by the program, as well as generally leading to a high level of satisfaction on the part of the participants [23]. Furthermore, according to Starostina [24], the application of SL enables university students to become aware of the problems they are addressing and to develop attitudes of empathy and appreciation among themselves and towards the people with whom they work, which was observed in the application of the developed program. On the other hand, raising awareness will allow us, as future educational professionals, to acquire skills and competences that will allow us to correct this type of behavior in future generations, developing an awareness of the need for reforms not only at the curricular level but also at the social level [24].

5. Conclusions

The SL project "Abre tus ojos" (Open your eyes) has responded to a social need by allowing students from different courses in the Faculty of Education to participate, not only as students in training, but also as future education professionals. In this sense, the students were actively involved in the project. As there are different groups belonging to different courses of the degree, a higher level of involvement was observed among the students of the last courses (3rd and 4th) as opposed to those of the 1st course.

In general, the students have been quite motivated in the activities related to the project, as they are aware of the direct impact of the activity on professional practice, as well as of the usefulness of the resources created. The students' work is particularly valuable because, in addition to gaining a qualification, it has a practical application for society. This leads to greater student motivation.

The core competences worked on in the project are related to critical thinking, application of knowledge to the professional environment, and teamwork. Specifically, knowledge and effective use of educational technology, competences related to the design and production of didactic materials in different technological supports, as well as collaboration with associations or entities of the social environment aimed at improving it.

The SL project has an impact on all the actors involved. On the one hand, the students of the Faculty of Education have received training in gender awareness and prevention, which will later have an impact on their professional practice. It has also made it possible to identify and deal with cases of gender-based violence in the university population. On the other hand, the ADAVAS Burgos association has contributed to the visibility of its social work, because although the association has been working for 25 years in the direct care of victims of sexual assault or domestic violence, it is not well known in the city, and it is important that this resource is known so that it can be used.

In conclusion, the implementation of the project has been very satisfactory, responding to the social needs set out in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in relation to the use of Information and Communication Technologies as a resource to promote women's empowerment and contribute to the eradication of gender-based violence, in accordance with Spanish policies and legislation on equality and protection against gender-based violence.

Based on the good results obtained, we will continue to develop the project, as it is necessary to continue strengthening education and prevention from an early age, with a transversal approach in all educational and social policies.

As lines of future research and to improve the SL project 'Open your eyes', we are considering conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups to gather qualitative perceptions and to provide a richer understanding of students' development in terms of gender equality. In addition, it would be very interesting to increase the sample by involving students from other faculties and disciplines to encourage a more holistic approach.

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Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The original data presented in the study are openly available in [SL project "Open your eyes"] at [https://bit.ly/web_APS_AbreTusOjos] (accessed on 10 December 2024).

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

ADAVAS	Association for the Support of Victims of Gender Violence
UN	United Nations
SDP	Sustainable Development Goal
SL	Service Learning
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
CEIG	Competences for Educating in Gender Equality
SD	Standard Deviation

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