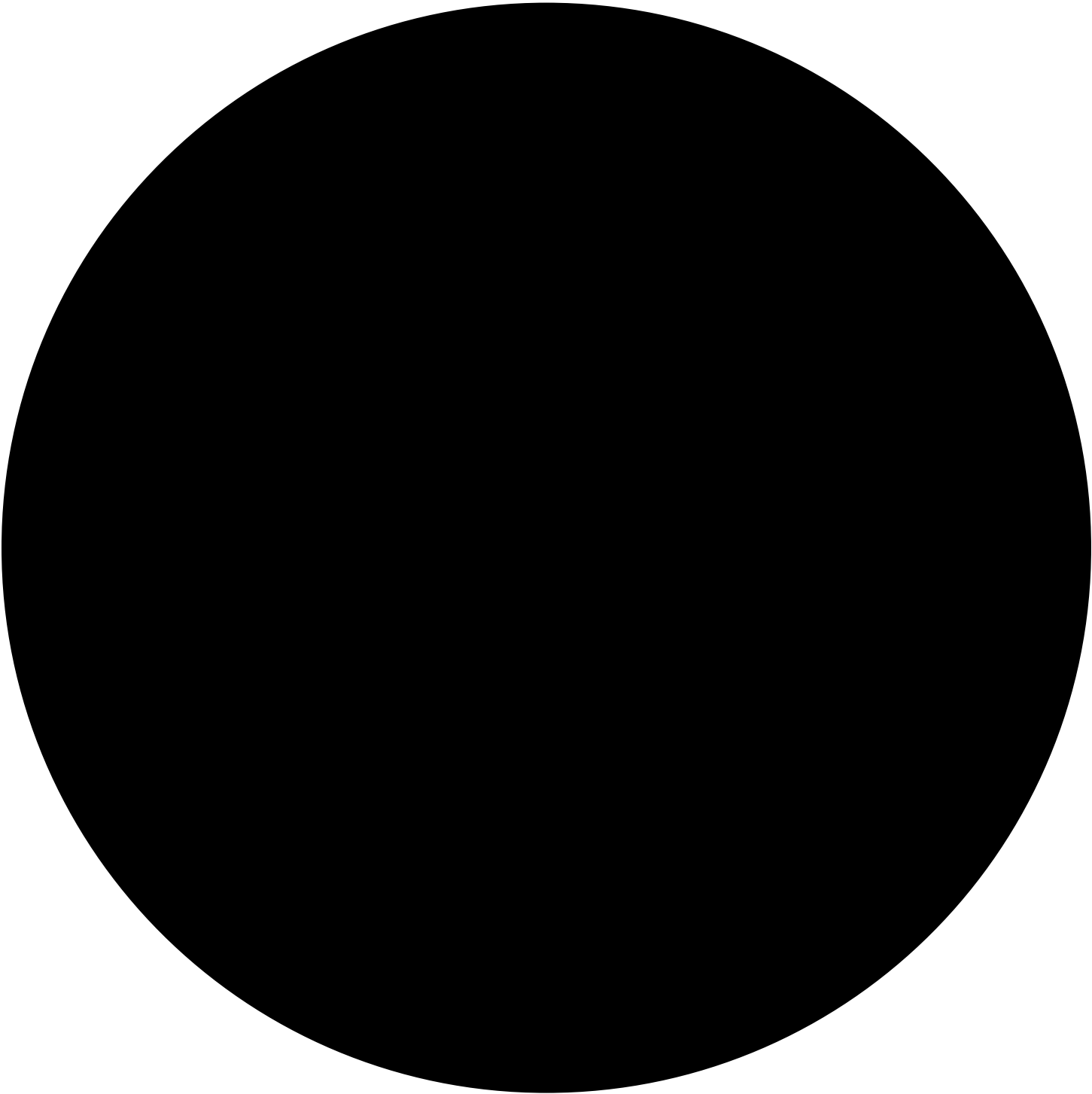


ASIA, GREAT DOMINATOR OF THE WORLD RANKINGS OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

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On May 12, the world rankings on school education were published, with five Asian countries occupying the first five positions on the list. African countries, on the other hand, are in the last places. The report, published by the [OECD](#) and written by [Eric Hanushek](#) of Stanford University and [Ludger Woessmann](#) from the University of Munich , argues that the level of education is a "powerful predictor of the wealth that countries will produce in the long term."

The [OECD \(Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development\)](#) highlights the strong relationship between education and potential economic growth (based on test scores from 76 countries). According to [Andreas Schleicher](#), Educational Director of the OECD, "This is the first time that we have obtained truly global and comprehensive results on the quality of education. The aim is to give more countries, both poor and rich, the chance to compare themselves with the world leaders in education; discover their own strengths and weaknesses; see the long-term economic benefits that could be gained from quality education in schools." As an example of how much progress can be made even as a poor country, there is the case of Singapore, the current leader, which had high levels of illiteracy in the 1960s.

In the case of the United Kingdom (ranked 20th), the study shows that one in five young people

leave school without reaching a basic level of education, and the OECD says that reducing this number and improving skills could bring trillions of dollars to the British economy.

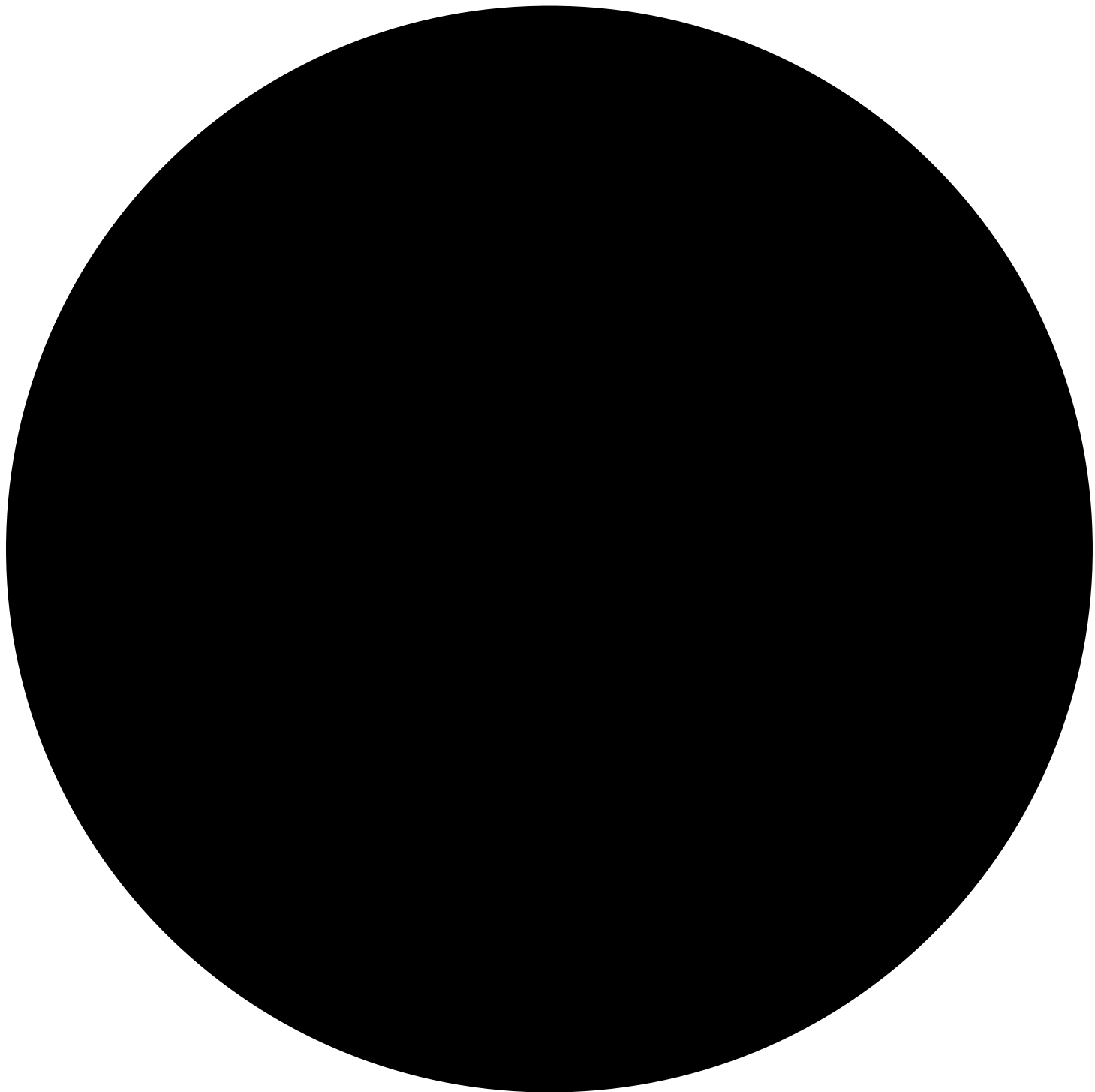
However, this assessment system has been criticized by British educational authorities. "They (the OECD) are skewing schools and education systems away from real learning towards rote learning. These league tables are possibly doing more harm than good," says [Sir Anthony Seldon](#), head of Wellington College in Berkshire (UK).

The analysis is based on results of mathematics and science tests, and offers us a broader vision of the educational situation worldwide than the analyzes based on [PISA tests](#) from the OECD itself, which focus on rich industrialized countries.

Regarding potential economic growth, this second classification is based on a series of international assessments, including the OECD PISA tests, the [TIMSS tests](#) led by US academics and [TERCE tests in Latin America](#), including both developed and developing countries in a single scale. This list is inversely proportional to the education rank. The two lists are strongly related.

As an example of the relationship between education and potential growth, we have chosen Ghana. If Ghana, the lowest-ranked country in education, achieved basic skills for all its 15-year-old schoolchildren, the report says it would multiply its current GDP by 38 times (being the country with the highest potential economic growth), in the lifetime of today's youth.

The results have been formally presented at the World Education Forum in South Korea, where the United Nations has convened a conference on the steps to follow to raise the world educational level by 2030.



There are no comments yet.