

## Exploring the Reflection of Teachers to Encourage the Gender Equality for Girls in Punjab Schools: In the Light of Universal Right to an Education

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### Abstract

This study examined educational barriers faced by girls. Its main objective was to investigate how teachers reflect on gender equality in Punjab schools for girls based on the universal right to education. Five factors were identified: distance from school, and the lack of educational institutions, financing, women teachers, and school facilities. A quantitative survey was conducted of 314 primary to higher secondary school teachers using convenience sampling. Data analysis was performed using SPSS and Smart PLS 4.0. The measurement model was validated using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling. Path analysis was used to determine the independent-dependent relationship. The findings indicate that all factors negatively impact universal rights to education. Thus, governments should emphasize girls' education by expanding girls' schools, providing appropriate financing, implementing and enforcing gender equality laws, and monitoring outcomes. Additionally, awareness campaigns and advocacy programs may challenge traditional perceptions and attitudes, thereby addressing the gender gap in education.

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### Key words

Girls Education, Barriers, Equal rights, Institutions, Punjab

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## Introduction

The foundation of education for women is rooted in fundamental values such as human rights, equality, and the advancement and prosperity of entire societies. Ensuring universal access to high-quality education for girls and young women is a fundamental human right, a top priority for global development, and a strategic objective for the World Bank (Rao, Umayahara, Yang, & Ranganathan, 2021). According to Tyagi, Vishwakarma, Rishi, and Rajiah (2020), the education of women extends beyond mere enrollment. It further encompasses guaranteeing that young women have the chance to complete all levels of education, thereby equipping themselves with the knowledge and abilities to compete in the labor market, acquire the socio-emotional and life skills essential for navigating and adapting to an ever-changing world, exercise autonomy in decision-making regarding their personal lives; and make meaningful contributions to their communities and the global community (Whipple & Dimitrova-Grajzl, 2021).

Women education is understood to be crucial for intergenerational knowledge transmission, gender equality, and social change and is explicitly linked to development outcomes (Hakim, 2022). As an acknowledged fundamental human right, education is also extended to women. Implementing mandatory education for women serve to protect their entitlement to education and aids in the dismantling of gender-based prejudices and discrimination (Iddy, 2021). Girls' education is integral to the progress of societies as a whole. women who receive an education make significant contributions to the labor force, engage in economic endeavors, and assume critical positions in advancing their communities and countries on a social and economic level (S. G. Smith & Sinkford, 2022).

By Islam and Hoque (2022) Educated women will likely be able to break free from the cycle of destitution. Girls who choose to attend school do so because it equips them with the knowledge and abilities necessary to obtain better employment opportunities, thereby improving their families and economic circumstances. The relationship between education and health outcomes is favorable. Providing health, hygiene, and nutrition education to women through compulsory education fosters the development of healthier lifestyles and improves their overall well-being (Parsons, Houge Mackenzie, Filep, & Brymer, 2020). Girls are empowered through education because it equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to make well-informed life choices. This facilitates their domestic and international decision-making, promoting a sense of empowerment and agency (Montes et al., 2022).

A correlation exists between mandatory education for women and reduced rates of fertility. Girls who acquire an education are more inclined to postpone marriage and procreation, facilitating population control and allowing them to strategize their family formation (Masuda & Yamauchi, 2020). Education contributes to the prevention of gender-based violence. Girls' compulsory education aids in the development of skills to identify and resist various forms of violence, as well as raises awareness of their rights (Dadvand & Cahill, 2021).

Girls' mandatory education catalyzes enhanced political engagement and leadership potential. Women that has received a formal education is associated with greater participation in civic duties, advocacy for rights, and leadership positions in both communities and countries. Girls' access to opportunities may be constrained by cultural and social norms confronted and altered by compulsory education (Carey, Akiva, Abdellatif, & Daughtry, 2021). It fosters a more equitable and inclusive society by dismantling conventional gender roles and stereotypes. Although there may be variations in the provisions of compulsory education policies among nations, their fundamental goal remains the same: to guarantee equitable access to education for women, thereby enabling them to lead gratifying lives and make significant contributions to the progress of their communities (Sharma, 2020).

### **Girls' Educational Status in Pakistan**

Pakistan was classified as having "low human development" by the Human Development Report (HDR) due to its thirty percent women literacy rate. From a global perspective, Pakistan is ranked 145th in human development (Rehman, Jingdong, & Hussain, 2015). According to Zakar et al. (2013) five million children in Pakistan are not enrolled in primary school; 62% are women. The Sustainable Development Goals emphasize gender equality and superior education (goals 4 and 5) (Heleta & Bagus, 2021; Kopnina, 2020; Mérida-Serrano, González-Alfaya, Olivares-García, Rodríguez-Carrillo, & Muñoz-Moya, 2020; Shulla, Filho, Lardjane, Sommer, & Borgemeister, 2020). Both objectives fulfill a long-awaited desire of most women in developing and underdeveloped nations. Women have fought for equality throughout history, and access to high-quality education has also persisted as a goal. While the Pakistani constitution guarantees education as a fundamental right for all women citizens, the state of affairs could be more favorable. In pursuit of obtaining higher education, they encountered several obstacles. The proportion of Pakistani women enrolled in higher education is alarmingly low when compared to that of males (Ali, Ali, & Wajahat, 2021; Halai

& Durrani, 2021), Girls in Pakistan face significant barriers to obtain education, and those who do manage to do so must contend for this fundamental privilege. This research aims to develop a comprehensive and implementable strategy that tackles various obstacles impeding the education of women in the Multan District. The ultimate aim is to establish a fair and inclusive educational system, empowering and elevating the entire community.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The foundation of the theoretical framework advocating for girls' education is a multitude of perspectives and principles that emphasize the significance of educating and empowering young women (Dover, 2013; Unterhalter et al., 2014). Diverse conceptualizations of quality are influenced by broader theoretical frameworks and paradigms of development, which may or may not incorporate a theoretically consistent treatment of gender (Collins & Stockton, 2018). Becker argued in the 1960s that the benefit of additional education for women could be measured by family earnings rather than individual earnings, given the low labor force participation rate among women, particularly after marriage (Bandelj & Spiegel, 2023). Feminist theory seeks to comprehend the origins and mechanisms of gender inequality in education, as well as the consequences on society. Similar to numerous other societal institutions, educational systems exhibit a notable lack of equity in terms of treatment and opportunities for women (Bensimon & Marshall, 2020; O'Connor, 2020).

However it was appended to the outset of Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, in which provided a foundational outline of the subsequent arguments and offered cogent justifications emphasizing the critical nature of women's education (Wolloch, 2022). Critical feminist pedagogy investigates how various attributes such as ability, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and social class intersect and contribute to patriarchal systems of knowledge and oppression. These systems include those that support the academic establishment and conventional pedagogical practices (Busse, Krausch, & Liao, 2021; Cannizzo, 2021; Grissom-Broughton, 2020). Using Marxist-feminist analysis, we contend that education/learning is only one facet of prosperity, justice, equality, democracy, and peace in complex social relations of power (Sousa, 2021) .

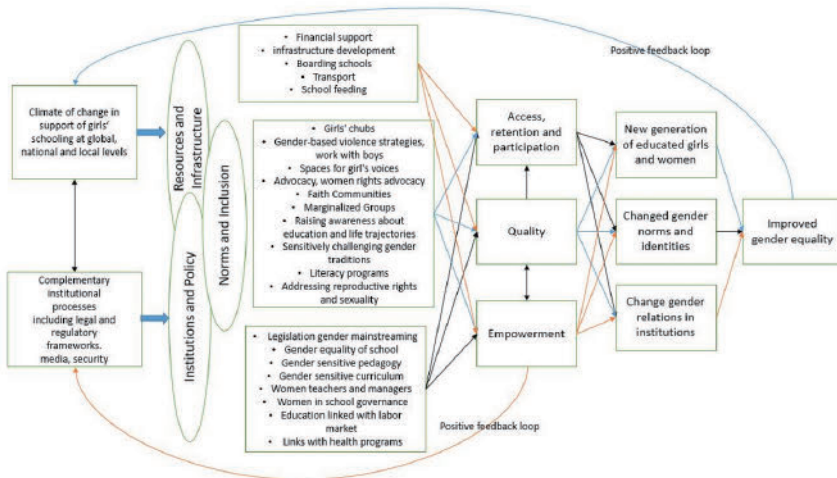


Figure 1. Theoretical Approach by Unterhalter et al. (2014)

## Review of Literature

Education is a crucial element in the progress and advancement of society. It serves as a means to acquire knowledge and enhance abilities and promotes gender equality and consciousness. Numerous organizations and scholars have approached this issue from their vantage point, but reformation is still necessary. An exhaustive examination of the existing body of literature can yield valuable insights regarding the present condition of girls' education in the area, shed light on obstacles that may be encountered, and identify possible interventions (Hinkelman, 2004). What is currently understood about the effect investing in women's education has on gender equality, women's empowerment, and women's well-being are examined in this section through a review of empirical literature from various social science and health disciplines.

According to previous research women attain elevated levels of self-esteem when they understand and are confident in their talents, capabilities, and passions. These studies analyze several essential components for fostering self-esteem in young women and provides evidence that violence against women can potentially be effectively mitigated by questioning gender stereotypes (Bligh, Schlehofer, Casad, & Gaffney, 2012; Hayhurst, 2013).

Additional studies elucidate the critical nature of women-only self-defense courses, which aim to challenge conventional gender-role socialization and em-

power women with the belief that they possess the ability and entitlement to protect themselves (Elise Radina, 2017). Like, self-defense courses empower women by teaching them practical techniques for physical defense, situational awareness, and mental preparedness. These courses build confidence, helping women to assert boundaries and respond effectively in threatening situations. Additionally, they provide a supportive environment where women can learn to protect themselves while fostering a sense of community and empowerment. Moreover, invoking embodied conceptions of resistance in the context of a martial arts-based sport, gender and development program, this paper also draws on research on gender-based and sexual violence that indicates self-defense training can actively alter gender stereotypes, allowing men (and other women) to perceive women as self-reliant, powerful, and capable (Hayhurst, 2014).

The initial assessment of Punjab Education Sector Reforms program's impact was carried out by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in 2006 (Chaudhury & Parajuli, 2010), and assessed the effects of Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program on primary rate enrollment and discovered that both gross and net primary enrollment rates in Punjab province improved significantly (Tajammal, Arun, & Pourmehdi, 2023). Research examining the Generalized System of Preference effects on adolescent girls' academic achievements has revealed that the program has a moderately negative effect on the girls' academic development and completion of middle school (Alam, Baez, & Del Carpio, 2011).

Furthermore, immediate benefits include increased enrollment in various grades throughout middle school and a greater probability of successfully transferring to high school and completing at least one grade (Francis & Darity, 2021). Guglielmi et al. (2021) stated that the primary objective is to utilize this evidence to guide programming during times of crisis and assist a wide range of stakeholders in minimizing the adverse effects of emergencies on the education of women.

Exploring the barriers to women's education reveals numerous challenges highlighted in previous studies. These include a lack of support for women's education (Munro, Hunter, Hossain, & Keep, 2021), issues like child marriage and adolescent pregnancy (Baba, Yendork, & Atindanbila, 2020), and insufficient data on the benefits of education (Reuge et al., 2021). Additional hurdles involve gender-based violence in schools (Geppert, Shah, & Hirsch, 2023), a lack of gender sensitivity in the classroom (Park & Kim, 2020), the absence of secure environments and supportive relationships (Kuss, Kristensen, Williams, & Lopez-Fernandez, 2022), inadequate instructional materials (Ng, 2022), and insufficient academic assistance (Dong, Xu, Chai, & Zhai, 2020).

Other significant obstacles include inadequate menstrual hygiene management (Sommer et al., 2021), limited health and caregiving services (Donelan, Falik, & DesRoches, 2001), and a lack of life skills education (Psaki, Haberland, Mensch, Woyczynski, & Chuang, 2022). Women also face barriers such as insufficient sports programs (Staurowsky et al., 2020), water and sanitation deficiencies (Assefa et al., 2021), and limited access to education (Guglielmi et al., 2021). Additional issues include a deficient policy and legal framework (Psaki et al., 2022), financial constraints on covering tuition and fees (Arar, 2021), the inability to purchase academic materials (Tomczyk & Walker, 2021), and food insufficiency (Villegas, Peirola, Rocca, Ipince, & Bakrania, 2021).

Another study compared girl-specific interventions to general interventions to determine which programs are most effective for facilitating girls' access to education and learning. It was determined that interventions targeting both girls and boys improved access and learning to the same extent as those targeting only girls (Dyke et al., 2021). As noted by the authors, eliminating gender-based obstacles could enhance girls' educational experiences and yield further enduring advantages, which could extend to men as well. In contrast to previous evaluations, this systematic assessment investigates a wide range of obstacles to determine which policies and interventions specifically target gender-related barriers to girls' education to enhance academic achievement and school engagement successfully. Therefore, based on the literature review five hypotheses were formulated such as:

- a) Distance from school has a negative effect on fulfilling the Universal Right to Education.
- b) Lack of educational institution has a negative effect on fulfilling the Universal Right to Education.
- c) Lack of finance effect has a negative effect on fulfilling the Universal Right to Education.
- d) Lack of women teachers has a negative effect on fulfilling the Universal Right to Education.
- e) Lack of school facility has a negative effect on fulfilling the Universal Right to Education.

## Methodology

The study was conducted using a quantitative survey approach. According to Stockemer, Stockemer, and Glaeser (2019), the survey technique entails gathering data from a representative sample of persons through their responses to questions.

This method encompasses several stages, one of which is the collection and analysis of quantitative data (Maqbool et al., 2023). The provided data is employed to examine hypotheses about the perceptions of teachers regarding the promotion of gender equality in girls' schools in Punjab, in consideration of the universal right to education.

The participants in this study are teachers from primary to higher secondary schools. The results of a comprehensive investigation involving 314 teachers who were utilized as the sample. They were all teachers at schools in Multan, Punjab, Pakistan. A convenience sampling strategy was employed to identify the participants for this study.

In addition to survey questionnaires, teachers were extended an invitation letter to partake in the study. The document comprised essential elements of the research and provided comprehensive guidelines for effectively completing the survey questionnaire. Teachers signed consent forms and participated voluntarily after obtaining permission from their respective head masters. The participants were granted the assurance that their personal information would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Additionally, they were advised of their prerogative to disengage from the study before the analysis phase.

A questionnaire was devised to evaluate the following factors: such as Distance of school (DS), Lack of educational institution (LEI), Lack of finance (LF), Lack of women teachers (LWT), Lack of school facility (LSF), and Universal Rights (UR). The participant responses were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale with five levels of agreement, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly Agree), and the total questionnaire contained 23 statements. However, Cronbach's alpha was computed to assess the survey questionnaire's dependability. The overall value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.91 that indicated a valid questionnaire by the literature (Zafeer, Li, & Maqbool, 2023; Zafeer, Maqbool, & Yanping, 2022). Further, the researcher translated the questionnaire into Urdu, while the participants responded in their native languages to ensure optimal comprehension for the study. For data analysis, two statistical instruments and software were employed: Smart (PLS-SEM) and a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

A comprehensive evaluation of the dataset was undertaken to ascertain its adherence to the specifications of the measurement model and its suitability for subsequent analysis. The initial stage of the evaluation procedure involved an examination of the loadings of the indicators. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is utilized for measurement model validation. Measurement models can assess various forms of validity (Baharum et al., 2023). Furthermore, PLS-SEM, or Partial Least



Squares Structural Equation Modeling, was applied to evaluate the concept. Small sample sizes and complex models are amenable to this technique (Rosak-Szyrocka & Tiwari, 2023). PLS-SEM is a two-step process for multivariate statistical analysis: initially, the measurement model is assessed, followed by the evaluation of the structural model utilizing SmartPLS 4.0. To guarantee the accuracy of the analysis, 10,000 bootstrap samples were employed.

## Findings

The demographic characteristics of the participants, including gender, age, and type of school are summarized in Table 1. The analysis of these variables was conducted using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The gender distribution indicates the inclusion of both males and females, with a mean of 1.60 and a standard deviation of 0.492. Participants' ages were grouped into two categories: 20–25 years and 26–30 years, with a mean of 1.37 and a standard deviation of 0.483. The school types were categorized into public, private, and co-sector, with a mean of 1.73 and a standard deviation of 0.618.

**Table 1**  
**Participant Demographic Statistics**

Variables	F	(%)	M	SD
Gender				
Male	199	63.4	1.60	0.492
Female	115	36.6		
Total	314	100.0		
Age				
20-25	127	40.4	1.37	0.483
26-30	187	59.6		
Total	314	100.0		
School				
Public	113	36.0	1.73	0.618
Private	172	54.8		
Co-Sectors	29	9.2		
Total	314	100.0		

*Note.* f = frequency, % = percentage, M = mean, SD = standard deviation

### Analysis of the measurement model

The initial stage in establishing the dependability and accuracy of the measurement variables and preparing the groundwork for subsequent structural analysis is a Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Each hypothesis is examined for causal relationships between latent constructs, using PLS-SEM to test the results. Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) were employed to evaluate the internal consistency and reliability of the measure. This choice was based on prior research suggesting that composite reliability (CR) estimates yield more precise reliability coefficients (Hair Jr, Howard, & Nitzl, 2020).

**Table 2**  
**Factors Loading and Assessment of the Indicators**

Indicators	Factor Loading	VIF	Cronbach's alpha	Cr	AVE
DS	0.876	3.057	0.888	0.918	0.692
DS	0.858	2.798			
DS	0.895	3.051			
DS	0.816	2.229			
DS	0.700	1.602			
LEI	0.571	1.066	0.548	0.769	0.532
LEI	0.821	1.301			
LEI	0.772	1.266			
LF	0.707	1.169	0.740	0.854	0.663
LF	0.866	2.330			
LF	0.859	2.381			
LFT	0.663	1.253	0.701	0.814	0.523
LFT	0.745	1.457			
LFT	0.736	1.523			
LFT	0.746	1.210			
LSF	0.739	1.373	0.759	0.846	0.580
LSF	0.798	1.619			
LSF	0.687	1.462			
LSF	0.815	1.640			
UR	0.715	1.262	0.698	0.815	0.525
UR	0.670	1.236			
UR	0.721	1.352			
UR	0.789	1.444			

*Note.* = Distance of school, LEI = Lack of educational institution, LF = Lack of finance, LFT = Lack of women teachers, LSF= Lack of school facility, UR = Universal Rights VIF= Variance Inflation Factor; CA = cronbach's alpha; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted

A convergent validity test was performed by calculating the average variance explained (AVE) for each construct across all items (Rönkkö & Cho, 2022), as presented in Table 2. The results demonstrate that all AVE values satisfy the minimum admissible threshold of 0.5, thus confirming convergence (Appiah-Twum & Long, 2023). Consequently, the values of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) were implemented. A multicollinearity issue becomes apparent when the VIF values surpass 5. The greatest outer VIF value recorded was 3.057, which is within the permissible range according to the findings of Hur (2018).

The path analysis model illustrates in figure 2 that it is necessary to eliminate measurement items that have a loading below 0.50. Previous studies indicated that each item loading should be greater than 0.50 (Maqbool, Zafeer, Zeng, et al., 2024; Yusif, Hafeez-Baig, Soar, & Teik, 2020), and the current investigation displayed a loading range that was greater than 0.50. The distance of schools varies between 0.895 and 0.700, the lack of educational institutions between 0.821 and 0.571, the lack of finance between 0.866 and 0.707, the lack of women teachers between 0.746 and 0.663, the lack of school facilities between 0.815 and 0.687, and universal rights between 0.789 and 0.670. The distance of school has the greatest factor loading, while the lack of educational institutions has the least.

Using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) method, the constructs' discriminant validity was evaluated. The HTMT ratio should be less 0.85 (strictly speaking) or 0.90 (acceptable), according to the literature (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015; Maqbool, Zafeer, Maqbool, et al., 2024). As shown in Table 3, all HTMT values

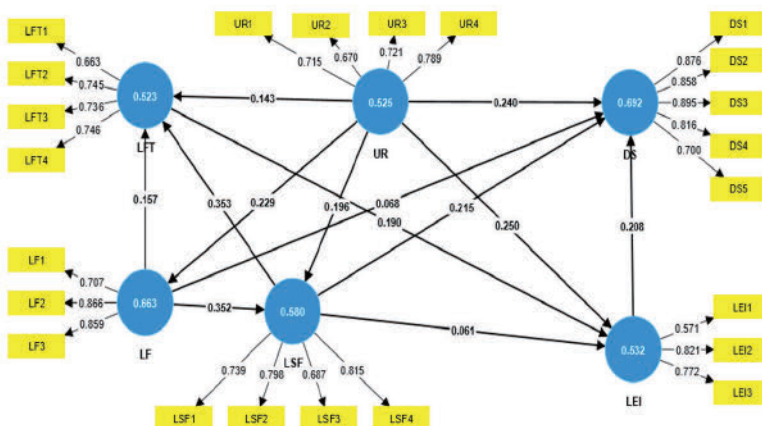


Figure 2. Measurement (Path Analysis) model

**Table 3**  
**Discriminant Validity of each Variable Using HTMT90 Criterion**

Variables	DS	LFI	LF	LFT	LSF	UR
DS	0.832					
LEI	0.351	0.729				
LF	0.267	0.283	0.814			
LFT	0.331	0.287	0.330	0.723		
LSF	0.353	0.216	0.396	0.455	0.761	
UR	0.381	0.320	0.229	0.277	0.276	0.725

Note: DS= Distance of school, LEI = Lack of educational institutions, LF = Lack of finance, LFT = Lack of women teachers, LSF= Lack of school facility, UR = Universal Rights

fall below the threshold value of 0.90, providing further evidence that discriminant validity has been established. Additionally, once the measurement model's reliability and validity have been confirmed, the next step is to build the structural model, look at possible lines of inquiry, and come up with testing hypotheses.

#### Validation of hypotheses and structural models

Table 4 presents hypothesis testing through path analysis in which path coefficients, beta values, t-statistics, p-values, and f-squared were utilized to describe the indicators. UR followed the following orders of significance: DS ( $\beta = 0.054$ ,  $t = 4.412$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), LEI ( $\beta = 0.060$ ,  $t = 4.195$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), LF ( $\beta = 0.058$ ,  $t = 3.967$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), LFT ( $\beta = 0.056$ ,  $t = 2.562$ ,  $p < 0.010$ ), and LSF ( $\beta = 0.052$ ,  $t = 3.728$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ). It was discovered that the acceptance of each indicator had a substantial and noteworthy impact on the following universal rights-related in-

**Table 4**  
**Hypothesis Testing through Path Analysis**

Relationship	Path Coefficients	B	T	P	f-Square	d (f2)	2.5%	97.5%	Decision
UR -> DS	0.240	0.054	4.412	0.000	0.066	0.132	0.345	Accepted	
UR -> LEI	0.250	0.060	4.195	0.000	0.066	0.133	0.365	Accepted	
UR -> LF	0.229	0.058	3.967	0.000	0.055	0.116	0.344	Accepted	
UR -> LFT	0.143	0.056	2.562	0.010	0.025	0.036	0.255	Accepted	
UR -> LSF	0.196	0.052	3.728	0.000	0.045	0.093	0.296	Accepted	

Note: DS = Distance of school, LEI = Lack of educational institution, LF = Lack of finance, LFT = Lack of women teachers, LSF= Lack of school facility, UR = Universal Rights  $P < 0.001$ , PC =Path Coefficients,  $\beta$  = Beta-Value,  $t$  =T- Statistics

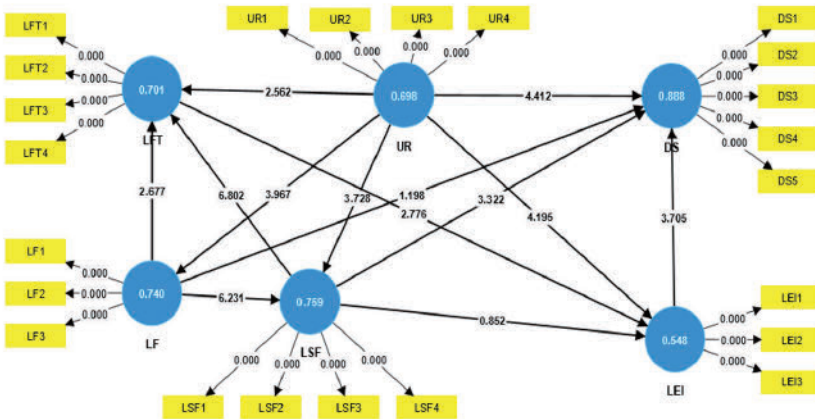


Figure 3. Bootstrap image for Path Analysis

indicators: distance of school, lack of educational institutions, lack of finance, lack of women teachers, and lack of school facility.

In figure 3 the findings of the study indicated that the lack of educational institutions and the distance of schools had the greatest impact on the universal rights of girls in the educational sectors of Punjab and Multan, Pakistan. The minimal effect of the lack of women educators in that region can be attributed to the lack of educational institutions. However, these findings suggest that by increasing the number of schools dedicated to girls' education, the need for female teachers would rise. This increase would not only address the current shortage of female educators but also create a positive cycle where more girls are educated, leading to a greater pool of qualified women who can return to teach in their communities.

The measurement model (PLS-SEM) was established using partial least squares analysis. According to the research model, the data fit was adequate. It was possible to conclude that the final model was well-fitting, as all fit indices satisfied this factor. A satisfactory model was attained after undergoing multiple iterations (McNeish & Wolf, 2023). As shown in figure 3, the model that provided the best fit exhibited inter correlation among the scales, which corresponds to latent factors. Multiple metrics are employed to evaluate it, such as the Normed Fit Index (NFI), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), and chi-square. The goodness of fit indices presented in Table 5, including SRMR = 0.074, Chi-square = 745.492, and NFI = 0.724, provide evidence that the final model is appropriately fitted.

**Table 5**  
**Goodness-of-Fit Indices**

Fit Indices	EM
SRMR	0.074
$\chi^2$	745.492
NFI	0.724

*Note:* SRMR = standardized root mean square residual,  $\chi^2$  = chi-square, NFI = Normed Fit Index, EM = Estimated Model

## Discussion

The nuanced and intricate nature of the discourse about the responsibility of educators to advance gender equality in girls' institutions in Punjab is evident (Khan, 2023). Given the recognition of the universal right to education, educators assume a pivotal role in altering perspectives, contesting preconceived notions, and actively fostering a more inclusive academic milieu (Polat & Çelik, 2023). However, the World Bank has also contributed by hosting a global, multidisciplinary symposium focused on gender, education, and development, aimed at reinvigorating initiatives to advance educational equity (Bergeron, 2003). Therefore, the present study explored the reflection of teacher for gender equality among women in Punjab institutions concerning the universal right to education. Teachers from primary to higher secondary institutions participated in the data collection process. Initially, five hypotheses were developed. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using various statistical methods, including SPSS and PLS-SEM.

This research has identified a diverse array of determinants that effect gender equality in girls' institutions in Punjab. The distance to school, the lack of educational institutions, lack of finance, the lack of women teachers, and lack of school facilities all have a negative significant impact on girls' education. Additionally the results revealed that the highest negative impact was the lack of educational institutions and distance from schools.

Furthermore it is essential to comprehend the underlying causes and put focused tactics into action. Ensuring that everyone has access to a high-quality education is one of the most important These should be included; giving girls financial aid and scholarships tactics for empowering women through education (Chan, Spaid Miedema, Naved, & Yount, 2023; Vaughan & Longlands, 2023). Collaboration between the foreign community, civil society organizations, and the government is also necessary to address gender inequities in education (E. C. Smith & Hamel, 2023). Governments

ought to place a high priority on girls' education by providing adequate funding, putting gender equality laws into place, upholding them, and keeping an eye on the results (Khoswe, 2023). The foreign community can offer financial and technical help, but civil society organizations can be vital in carrying out projects and programmers locally (Letsch, 2023).

## Conclusions

In conclusion, Pakistan's educational overall growth and advancement depend on resolving gender inequalities in education and enabling women to complete their education (Malik & Courtney, 2011). In Pakistan, the gender gap in education has long been a problem, with women having to overcome several obstacles to receive a good education. But lately, there have been initiatives to close this disparity and provide girls with more influence via education, and these initiatives have had encouraging outcomes. Regardless of gender, everyone has the fundamental right to education, which is essential for ending the cycle of poverty and promoting social and economic advancement. Girls with greater education are more likely to seek postsecondary education, get better jobs, and make contributions to the economy and communities. Pakistan has to launch several programs to overcome gender gaps in education. These steps should be taken, including providing financial aid and scholarships for girls, establishing all-girls schools and universities, promoting women educators, and implementing gender-sensitive curricula and instructional strategies. Furthermore, awareness campaigns and advocacy efforts should be organized to challenge traditional beliefs and attitudes, which can play a significant role in closing the gender gap in education.

## Limitations

Personal experiences, views, and biases shape teachers' observations, making them necessarily subjective. The presence of subjectivity in this matter may limit the ability to apply the findings and insights to a variety of situations. Moreover, teachers may feel under pressure to offer socially acceptable answers, especially when addressing delicate subjects like gender equality. This can lead to an underrepresentation of discriminatory practices or an excessive focus on progressive views, thereby distorting the statistics.

Furthermore, teachers are a single stakeholder group in the education system. Although their ideas hold value, they may not encompass the viewpoints of other

significant stakeholders, such as students, parents, administrators, or lawmakers, whose voices are equally essential in advancing gender equality.

However, undertaking thorough investigations into teachers' reflections necessitates substantial time and resources such as limited teacher availability for meetings and insufficient funding for travel between schools, cities, and provinces, poses significant challenges. Thus, lack of resources may limit the study's scope and depth of analysis, potentially leading to the oversight of significant nuances or elements that influence gender dynamics in schools. Gender dynamics exhibit variations within diverse cultural and regional contexts. Study conducted in Multan, which one of the city of Punjab province and Punjab province is consisted 36 district. That is why the study findings may not directly apply to other areas or to nations with different cultural norms, socio-economic circumstances, or educational systems. Although there are limitations, examining teachers' views is still an important method for understanding and addressing gender disparities in education. When integrated with additional research methodologies and stakeholder viewpoints, it can enhance the comprehensiveness of endeavors to advance gender equality in Punjab schools and beyond.

## Implications

Teachers can use the insights from their reflections to inform the creation of focused teacher training programs. These programs aim to increase teachers' understanding of gender biases and provide them with techniques to actively promote gender equality in the classroom. However, reflections can illuminate aspects of the curriculum that might reinforce gender stereotypes or marginalize women. This information can provide guidance for revising curriculum materials to ensure they are more inclusive and representative of a wide range of gender identities. Further, teachers' self-reflections may uncover inherent biases in their instructional methods that unintentionally put girls at a disadvantage. Thus, teachers can create a fairer learning environment by acknowledging and addressing these biases and implementing inclusive pedagogical methods, such as cooperative learning or tailored instruction.

In addition, teachers' reflections can offer valuable insights to shape school policies and activities that promote gender equality. This may encompass efforts to combat gender-based violence, guarantee equitable access to resources and opportunities, and cultivate a nurturing school environment for all children. Teachers can act as champions for gender equality in their communities. By disseminating their thoughts and facilitating discussions on matters related to gender, individuals



can contribute to increasing consciousness and rallying assistance for endeavors focused on improving the educational rights of girls. Finally, examining teachers' reflections on promoting gender equality for girls in Punjab schools highlights the need to tackle structural obstacles to girls' education and empower educators to act as catalysts for change in their schools and communities.

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