Gender Disparities and Socio-Economic Barriers in Education in Pakistan
Introduction

Inequality, which significantly affects students' learning process and literacy, is a major issue in schools worldwide (Abboud and Karam, 2022). These differences are especially strong in Pakistan, with some of the most important being gender discrimination and poverty. Therefore, the purpose of this essay is to reflect on the students of one of the schools and the school itself, Government Girls High School in Rural Sindh. The essay explores, the nature and practices that help maintain the gender and economic imbalance. On the other hand, relying on the relevant education ideas, this essay investigates the effect of the educational inequality on the students and ways to implement more equal development. The analysis of personal learning from exploring such educational inequality and the effect that this new knowledge might have on the pedagogy is also provided.

Education in rural areas, especially for girls, is a paramount issue in improving quality of life. Pakistan has historically low literacy rates and high levels of dropout, with some segments disadvantaged because of their socio-economic status and/or gender

(UNESCO, 2018). In rural Sindh, where our discussion is based on, these issues are more pronounced as traditional sociocultural expectations generally prioritize male education over female education. This status quo is additionally exacerbated by poor school conditions and lack of female teachers, coupled with inadequate governmental funding. Generational gender roles and societal expectations about girls' potential also play a role in determining quality of education, especially in the rural countryside. Girls are generally brought up drawing from the cultural assumptions that their main role is in the household, and that schooling is not as beneficial as preparing them for their future limited role. As per the study by Ivinson & Murphy, (2007), single-sex generally are withdrawn from schools early, and then have little opportunity to pursue a career. This limitation is not only devastating towards the future, as it deprives the girls from personal development, but also ensures that most female children develop with limited career prospects, thus perpetuating a cycle of poverty and gender disparity.

Children's access to education, as well as the quality of the education they receive, is heavily impacted by families' socio-economic status. Especially in Rwanda, where poverty is widespread, children in many areas of the nation can attend schools only when their families have money. For example, in Rural Sindh, the majority of families cannot pay the indirect costs of schooling, such as purchasing uniforms and textbooks, or the opportunity cost of sending their children to school instead of keeping them at home to work. This represents a significant barrier to keeping their children enrolled in school: when families fall on hard times, girls are frequently the first to be withdrawn. Based on my personal experience at the Government Girls High School, the school's physical infrastructure is completely inadequate. Appalling physical facilities, including filthy water and toilets and classrooms that are unsuitable for studying in, are complete dismal attendance forces down; it also reflects how the community's schooling is seen more generally. Additionally, the curriculum and teaching methods do little to enhance students' learning or motivation because they are not suited to the girls' lives and genuine necessities. There are many ways from which such issues can be regarded. These could include improving school infrastructure such as providing pertinent needs and increasing more female teachers.

These potential changes could be implemented through community programs that include the participation of parents.

Poverty and Gender Inequality: Educational System Context

The convoluted history of Pakistan's education system stems from the colonial era, when the British laid down a structure directed at administrative concerns rather than comprehensive development. The national administration has struggled to implement, modify, and upgrade the nation's education system to cater to the diverse and rapidly expanding population since the country became independent in 1947. All of the aforementioned efforts have been insufficient and imbalanced, marred by a deep gender and socio-economic inequality chasm. This has compounded by political instability, varying aims of consecutive governments, and extreme regional disparities. Despite certain positive trends in terms of school enrollment and literacy rates, Pakistan has a long way to go before it can ensure equal access to a high-quality education for all of its citizens.

At the same time, Bilal's story in Zephyr Academy serves to illustrate the intersectionality of privilege and education and complement discussions in the chapters. In contrast to Ayesha, Bilal has greater access to socio-economic privilege, which manifests in a significantly higher availability of resources and opportunities compared to many of his fellow students. This situation illustrates the problem of unequal access to education that was also studied in the chapters focusing on gender and schooling inequality and socioeconomic inequality in schools. Bilal's experience also brings to light the importance of recognizing and addressing privilege in educational environments to ensure equal opportunity to students from different backgrounds. Just as the chapters in question argue that there is a need for broader understanding of the multifaceted play of factors in the students' academic outcomes, Bilal's story reminds of the intricate nature of socioeconomic status and privilege in relation to academic achievement.

The made-up Sunrise Government Girls High School in rural Sindh appears as a symbol of the fight against systemic gender and socioeconomic inequality. At the soil of the vast

agricultural landscapes and substantial socioeconomic issues in rural Sindh, Pakistan, lies the Sunrise Government Girls High School. Founded in the late 1980s, where Pakistan aggressively expanded its educational opportunities to include rural and underserved sectors, this school sought to narrow the wide gender imbalance in the educational structure at the time. The school does exactly that by giving its female pupils a sense of powerlessness through education. The school endures similar tribulations as the wider community, despite its noble goals. The students face challenges brought about by the surrounding mass poverty. When the local population lacks even the most basic of life's daily needs, students face a unique set of challenges. Sometimes parents need to prioritize their children's immediate needs, which might include educational expenditure when it is possible to choose between educational expenses such as books and uniforms and more pressing needs such as food and rent. Students like Arisha face social problems and low self-esteem if they attend school unprepared since it makes them feel embarrassed and othered among their well-prepared classmates. This is a mirror of the challenges which surround the school as the school's buildings and facilities are viewed as outdated and lacking in modern amenities due to the lack of funding, which is a mirror of the community's lack of concern for girls' education (Ali et al., 2022). According to Ivinson & Murphy, (2007), the deeply ingrained gender norms in the community significantly affect the educational outcomes for students at the Sunrise. The belief that women should stay at home and take care of their families is still prevalent in most of the community's populace making it difficult for girls to learn. Multiple students in the Sunrise, such as Sadia and others, have irregular attendance, not by choice but according to parental expectations that place house chores at a higher premium than the students' education.

This meant that very few rural Sindhi women could read or write when it first began. Since cultural, economic, and practical barriers prevented girls and, eventually, women from attending school, this is more widespread with a literacy rate in Pakistan: This led to the establishment of Sunrise School as a catalyst for change. The school's mission is to provide a young woman with an excellent education that will empower her to make

positive changes in the world and to question established conventions. Despite its perirural setting, the school acts as a link between the more rural areas and the more moderately developed capital: The school's site is significant because it has the potential to attract students from challenging rural origins while also influencing their social and economic status and the educational opportunities available to them in urban areas. As a result, the school participates in a variety of activities and receives varying levels of education: The school dogs are constructed in accordance with the local architectural style, using sturdy, powered bricks that are almost identical to the original bricks used in the school.

However, state-of-the-art schools do not include modern amenities like computerized teaching software, state-of-the-art laboratories, and the typical classrooms seen in a capital city (Abashidze et al., 2021). What matters most is that the school is an inclusive girl's school; however, it is still a local institution and classrooms are occupied by thousands of girls. Beyond its purely academic function, this institution stands as a focal point that gives girls' needs precedence over boys' household duties. As a result, the traditional disregard for the girl's occupation is rooted in an antiquated and deeply ingrained gender bias. According to the chapter "renegotiating the knowledge-gender dynamic", solar education improves the socioeconomic status of society as a whole and has a multiplicative effect on women's lives. Because women shoulder a portion of the capital cost, take the lead, and generate national income, this model is more economically fair.

Reproduction of Poverty: Vignettes

The impact of poverty on educational opportunities and quality is evident and visible in the lives of Arisha and other girls attending Sunrise Government Girls High School. Poorly maintained school buildings and a lack of teacher-supplied and purchased learning materials compound the challenges faced by students of low-income families. The perspective of sociocultural theory (Osunmuyiwa and Ahlborg, 2022), especially how societal values and structures influence educational opportunities and outcomes, helps explain the education gap in the case vignettes. Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory

argues that people's social relationships and cultural contexts have a significant effect on their learning and development. Understanding gender inequality and socioeconomic barriers in Pakistan's education system using this perspective is essential for grasping how cultural norms contribute to their existence.

Vignette 1 – Sunrise Government Girls High School

Yet it is the setting of a rural shock for this small building in Sindh, Pakistan, named Sunrise Government Girls High School (Were et al., 2021). Light of the surroundings, the description of sunrise, to be sure, glows somewhat more strongly than the collection of visual images associated with stark poverty and yet the inference of something much more significant as hopes and resilience can be drawn. The village's local economy primarily rests on agriculture, and, at the same time, nearly all of the poor lose their poverty. Thus, "as the roads get dustier and the community's life work—wheat and cotton fields—stretch under an oppressive sun, a frail proving ground for the generations who till them". The characterisation of the students and their families' surroundings and lives as marked by everyday challenges, such as lack of financial stability and long, grueling manual workday that prioritize immediate needs of survival and the need for income over educational opportunities, serves as a crucial background for understanding these challenges. And soon, a little yellowed school with already-fading paint but a lot of bougainvillaea colors—schoo. It also can be argued that setbacks of rural educational institutions in developing countries, marked by low resources and maintenance, can account for the flaking paint.

However, the bougainvillaea is still there, and its presence amidst seemingly dire circumstances symbolizes hope and beauty in hardship. This can be interpreted as a metaphorical description of girls' education in rural Pakistan—difficult but full of promise of development and progress. Further setting the scene of the school being in a rural location and less-developed country, the background noise is little children reciting lessons. These sounds symbolize how closely school is associated with agricultural work—the very rhythm of life in these parts indicates that schooling is as naturally a part

of life in these parts as the life of the cage. The school yard is dusty and with more dirt than grass and with few trees—the set implies resourcefulness yet vitality in the form of students. The blackboards in the classrooms are rickety, and so are the wooden desks—demonstrating a lack of financial resources. The aged blackboards and rickety desks serve to not only show the low resources with which conventional educational means and ways is used, but also the neglect that comes from economic circumstances. Blackboards are used as the main teaching tool, and with the lack of modern educational equipment like computers and projectors—education is conventionally conducted. A group of girls plays cricket while a corner of the school year has become the setting of a cricket field and the students cheer and laugh. This is the concluding visual image—students here can have moments of fun and laughter in an environment of nearly overwhelming hardship. Moreover, and especially for South Asia and cricket, the girls do so playing amongst the boys, gently challenging gender stereotypes.

Sunrise Government Girls High School, a high school located in rural, economically depressed Sindh, Pakistan, is an in-depth example of how regional setting and sociocultural background not only define a specific educational setting but also a larger array of societal and cultural elements that shape the patterns of schooling and girls' experiences at school. To better understand the ways in which gender, socioeconomic class, and cultural norms impact educational processes, the concept of sociocultural theory can be used (Flor et al., 2022). It appears that, in spite of the rural appeal of the school, students' lives are defined by harsh socioeconomic realities. These girls are constrained by the physical environment—old building, lack of academic means—and the broader economic deprivation of their background neighborhood. Not only does such deprivation put their academic opportunities at risk, but it also endangers the overall stability of their everyday existence; because more time is spent in agricultural labor or homemaking, which is particularly frequent for girls in this setting.

The educational experiences of female students at Sunrise Government Girls High School, likewise, are significantly affected by the cultural norms and biases pervading the community. In many rural areas of Pakistan, antiquated attitudes about gender persist

and limit the options and mobility of girls and women and confine them to domesticity. The societal expectation that allows gender discrimination to operate, insidiously and overtly, limits girls' education by relegating them to the home. These entrenched societal expectations, as well as the entrenched conceptions that young girl's educations are aggressively repressive and thus should be aggressively destroyed, findings revealed in the incidents of bullying and micro differential behaviour. One way to explore how the environment at Sunrise Government Girls High School restricts the potential Female Students can achieve is Lev Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development. The Zone of Proximal Development is the difference between a learner's abilities when working alone and a learner's abilities when assisted by a more experienced peer. The lack of educational resources and societal and cultural support for girls' education are the classroom's constraints on the ZPD. Because of these limitations, a large share of the potential additional growth and learning a pupil may accomplish with adequate support goes unrealized. The interactions that occur within a school environment further impact education outcome (Lau et al., 2021). These interactions may take the form of studentstudent relationships, student-teacher relationships, or even interactions with the larger community. Community leaders and educators will decide if they will uphold or contest pre-existing gender norms. Teachers who provide females with the scaffolding required to help them achieve higher skills and understanding may help them improve their ZPD.

However, as per renegotiating the knowledge-gender dynamic by Ivinson & Murphy, (2007), educational experiences should aim to eliminate barriers to females learning are unlikely to be successful if community members and educators harbor prejudiced sentiments about girls' education. **Vignette 2 – Arisha and Sadia**

The vignette of Arisha and Sadia at Sunrise Government Girls High School provides a rich narrative to explore the differential challenges that young girls face as they endeavor to secure education amid cultural demands and socio-economic restraints. These challenges, distinct but interrelated, have an impact on the learning pathways and outcomes of the girls, laws discussed in the two narratives. Arisha's story of a typical day

is a perfect example of how external socio-economic pressures act as barriers to learning. For example, the fact that while Arisha works in the fields before attending the school, and conservative areas would only let a family send a junior female to help in the house before considering them for a school position. Women demanded to be solely responsible for the majority of housework as a result, not only is Arisha physically tired, but she does not have enough time to read or relax, limiting the extent of participation in learning activities. As a result of her family's financial difficulties and father's sickness, Arisha is burdened by emotional and mental stress, made evident by her shy demeanor and constant anxiety in class. These extrapersonal imbalances might impair her capacity to focus and maintain concentration in class, acting as distracters. The ripped hem of the skirt symbolizes Arisha's family's poverty, which may marginalize and stigmatize her among her classmates or diminish her self-esteem. On the other hand, Sadia's story demonstrates a cultural barrier that denies girls' entry and persistence to the education curriculum. She is intelligent and a good student, but the problem is she has a lot of her mom's responsibilities to attend to a sister. This custodial responsibility is traditionally assigned to the eldest children, particularly females. These, too, might have influenced her interaction with the material and her association with the instructors who believe she has full capacity, and be disillusioned when she doesn't' show it.

Because of the decreased attendance, her performance is also influenced by the implication that she cannot grasp new concepts and lessons. Sadia's traditional medicine knowledge passed down to her by her grandmother explains how the other form of cultural capital is under-utilized and disregarded. She comes from an indigenous group, and she uses traditional medicine. This form of capital is disregarded in schools making her neglected and making her feel superior while outside working with the grandmother. The personal problems that Arisha and Sadia encountered depict the social scripts that affect the organisation and position of females in society. They manifest themselves differently, physically, mentally, and emotionally. With Arisha and Sadia's learning pathways being profoundly affected by gendered home roles and the pressures of the society, sociocultural settles deeply into their stories, and the school system has largely ignored

these issues' contribution to the big picture. As the stories of Arisha and Sadia show how ubiquitous socio-cultural issues are and their impact in limiting education opportunity for girls in such localities, the socio-cultural theory helps in interpreting their narrations.

As the stories of Arisha and Sadia show how ubiquitous socio-cultural issues are and their impact in limiting education opportunity for girls in such localities, the socio-cultural theory helps in interpreting their narrations. This story explains the dynamic interplay between individual learning and the societal norms that shape the learning experience. The following are examples of how this theory can help explain each concept: the Arisha story graphically portrays how sociocultural expectations might infiltrate a student's day-to-day life. Her chores at home prior to attending school are only a beginning, symbolizing cultural ideals of women prioritizing domestic help more than their educational aspirations. Because they symbolically reconnect Arisha to traditional expectations about gender, rather than just being physical labor. According to sociocultural theory, such expectations will highly influence Arisha's interaction with not just her family but also her community, which will apparently demand her to spend more time taking care of her house than excelling in school. Most notably, Arisha's educational environment does not contain supportive interactions that will help her develop academically. Arisha learning is severely restricted by the absence of more capable others tutors, mentors, and or support family members who can help her learn what she could not achieve on her own. Like Vygotsky's ZPD, she cannot close the void between what she can currently achieve and what she could achieve as her environment does not supply her with the necessary help.

Sadia's case presents a separate yet interconnected set of challenges. Indeed, it is cultural scripts that force Sadia not to attend the school regularly while keeping her brothers in place. Cultural scripts are socially created narratives that predetermined how people of a certain sex should behave and which position they should occupy. In her case, it is cultural scripts that make Sadia prioritize her family's needs over her education, which makes it impossible for her to be a regular participant in the process and restricts her academic and social growth (Farrukh et al., 2023). Her problem from the perspective of sociocultural theory and, more specifically, the way she interacts with her teachers, as a

reflection of the influence of the cultural scripts on her educational journey. In this regard, her teachers represent people within her zone of proximal development who could potentially provide her with academic support and enrichment. However, this interaction cannot be maximized because Sadia's attendance is sporadic; she cannot receive quality and continual education that would help her develop socially and cognitively. As a result, the expectations placed on Sadia not only restrict her current educational opportunities but also limit her future potential for personal and professional growth. Both of these cases show the importance of considering the numerous sociocultural environments in which students learn in any educational policy or intervention. Effective interventions would require a multidimensional approach that not only deals with the current educational needs but also addresses the broader sociocultural norms that determine those needs.

Vignette 3 – Bilal

Bilal's narrative in Vignette 3, unlike Arisha and Sadia's, depicts the gender inequities in encouraging educational completion and societal expectations in the same community. The stark difference between his experience in the boys' school, where it is normal to be encouraged to proceed to an institution of higher learning or leadership positions, and his female cousins' is tremendous. It demonstrates not just how prevalent such gender bias within the community is but also how emotionally and psychologically biased people become aware of the same. The unity of schooling between Bilal and his male counterparts and the concessions given to the male students in various societies, characterized in more nations by the observance of orthodox gender roles, show Bilal's schooling. His sisters, such as Sadia and Arisha, and other female children, are frequently unable to attain excellent diplomas on account of cultural predispositions that relegate women to the role of housewives. Completing leadership duties at the institution is then out-of-bounds. However, both these duties are expected of Bilal. His encouragement is a turning point because it not only encourages excellence in academics but also because it fosters a sense of entitlement to and capacity for growth in skills and earning. When he ultimately reaches home, he gets a tremendous boost of what he has learned so far. Bilal discovers first-hand what gender disparities are present because of the explicit

inequalities in his sisters in schooling. One can gaze his observational learning at, whereby the societal norms and values imitate him.

Bilal's experiences with the gender-based inequalities in education and instruction differ from those of female students. Although benefiting from a learning system biased in favor of males, sociocultural theory would also argue that cultural exchanges in a genderbiased learning context allowed him to access a larger zone of proximal development than his female peers. An expanded awareness of sociocultural influences is also apparent in his observation of variations between his educational experiences and those of his female cousins. Awareness of these influences has the potential to transform his beliefs and behaviors, such as in the previously mentioned observations, and this reveals how individuals who are part of a sociocultural context can be change agents.

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory is a proven theoretical framework for understating one's cognitive development and how it is influenced by their social interactions and culture in general. The theory believes that learning and development are essentially cultural and social processes. Individuals maintain shared cognitive functions through social "scenarios." This view of cognitive functions shifts the focus in psychology from understanding learning as something that happens only internally, in a solitary manner, to a viewpoint that learning is a social phenomenon embedded in social context. An additional principle of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is the notion of the Zone of Proximal Development. The zone of proximal development is the range of activities that a child acquires with the help of an expert but cannot conduct alone. That is, effective learning occurs when educational activities are located inside this zone, emphasizing it from a cognitive development perspective through interactional assistance. The role of the ZPD in learning is to connect the gap between what is known and what can be learned, given the proper social support (Ali et al., 2021). In general, ZPD is where the most meaningful cognitive development takes place. This means that teachers need to assess the degree of independence of learners in lessons.

Moreover, the idea of cultural capital, also proposed by a sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, supplements Vygostky's ideas by addressing non-monetary components of social advantage that can impact a student's education. Cultural capital includes the broad variety of cultural skills, knowledge, habits, and preferences that individuals end up having from their family and that they can use to their advantage in the workplace setting (Naz and Ashraf, 2020). If a student's cultural capital aligns well with the interests on the educational institution, she is more likely to thrive in the setting of education. A student whose cultural capital vastly different from the hegemonic culture of the school, however, may find achieving academic excellence considerably more challenging. Differences in cultural capital, therefore, can lead to differences in educational success rates among various students. Hence, the understanding of the educational experiences and achievements of students with different backgrounds can be greatly enhanced by exploring the connection between cultural capital and the ZPD. A student with high cultural capital that aligns with the school's cultural capital will find many tasks fit a student's ZPD because the student has sufficient preface background knowledge to engaged with the content. On the other hand, instead, students with limited background knowledge or skills needing to make use of a lot of external supports to participate in meaning-making activities will place a lot of tasks outside the student's ZPD.

Applying Theoretical Concepts

The difficulties manifesting when the ZPD of a student is unsupported come through in vivid examples of Arisha and Sadia's educational experiences. For instance, Arisha's school path is under threat, as she is overwhelmed with family and economic pressure that makes it tough to concentrate. In line with the ZPD theory, this young girl could have immensely benefited from properly tailored interventions that supported her learning needs. This is manifested through tutoring/mentoring programs that combine academic and emotional support, closing the gap between achievements and the level of academic potential that could be reached with the right direction. With Sadia's scenario, the necessity of flexible educational strategies grows even more evident in this context. Thus,

her educational route is obstructed by her skipping school to help home households, thus interrupting her educational trajectory.

First, Sadia's knowledge of herbal medicines in a formal education environment is nevertheless a vast cultural capital that is typically overlooked and undervalued. Her cultural competency, which has been passed down through many generations, has a great potential to supplement her education in a meaningful way (Islam and Jirattikorn, 2024). Second, Bilal's understanding of the gender differences in educational possibilities between him and his cousins exemplifies how boys and girls value cultural capital in various ways (Were et al., 2021). He might try to unite the two cultures and push for gender-neutral education policies because of his societal positionality.

Challenges to Schools

Establish poverty-proofing measures to ensure that no student is economically disadvantaged. For example, free school uniforms, textbooks, and school meals a school could ensure that poor families do not have additional burdens due to their children's education. Given the fact that a student like Sadia must divide her time between caring for her family and education, the school might create a flexible schedule or a part-time schooling track to enable her to continue learning while taking care of the family (Okunade et al., 3023). Integrate local cultural knowledge and skills into the curriculum to provide an inextricable link between learning and everyday life. In line with that, Sadia's knowledge of herbal cures might be included in science at school to help her see that her skills are relevant and may even be formalized and developed further.

In order to improve students' possibilities for ZPD, mentorship programs should be established so that they can receive support and advice from adults and peers who are more knowledgeable themselves. Students may benefit from after-school tutoring, counseling, and support groups that focus on their specific school challenges (Royce, 2022). Collaborate with community groups and leaders to spread the word about the value of gender parity in education and the long-term advantages it has for the development of the local population.

Strategies for Reducing Inequalities

Second, a curriculum that is more inclusive may be the foundation of resolving the educational disparities. It is necessary to provide a more inclusive curriculum that rejects existing gender stereotypes and fosters equality among pupils. Such a curriculum may also be beneficial for the school. The school should integrate subjects that challenge conventional gender norms and pertain to diverse role models, regardless of interracial, social, and gender distinctions in a more inclusive curriculum. This plan not just satisfies gender but also enlightened students' perspectives on life while also fostering a more inclusive and kinder attitude. To develop achievements and authority as typical across gender lines, literature and social topics may analyze the writings and dialogues that emphasize women and minorities' accomplishments in history and society.

The specified approaches to addressing educational inequalities are consistent with the identified themes in the provided chapters, specifically in "Rethinking Single Sex Teaching" by Ivinson & Murphy. First, similar to this chapter, the proposed curriculum reformation emphasizes inclusivity by combining subjects that involve various perspectives and role models regardless of gender, race, or socioeconomic status. Next, the focus on financial assistance and the provision of educational essentials aligns with the chapter's emphasis on addressing socioeconomic gaps. The implementation of these initiatives guarantees that all students have a more equal access to resources and assistance and such experience contributes to more successful learning outcomes as exemplified by an analysis of Ayesha's school experience in an underprivileged community (Johnson et al., 2020).

Going to school is one of the most significant barriers to education for many rural students. By providing transportation services to the school, rural schools can improve their ability to provide access to education. This might include finding school buses or collaborating with existing transportation options in the community to help all students have access to safe and reliable means of transportation. This is crucial in a rural environment where weekly, rather than daily, attendance is frequently a significant barrier. Regular and

dependable transportation will help guarantee that students regularly attend school, lowering the overall level of dropping out and boosting constant educational participation.

The Task Force also adopted the Capability Approach fundamentally shifts the priority from merely allowing students to attend school towards granting them abilities to break the chains of certain social conditions and improve their lives. Schools could accomplish this by developing a POWER curriculum simply and support paradigm. All this stufflearning new ways, critical thinking, seeing new jobs-can support students make better decisions for their future. The CAP would clearly concentrate on policies and practices that enable every learner, especially the most discriminated, to have the means and option of achieving in the setting of gender discrimination exacerbated by social situations caused by poverty.

Reflections and Future Practice

The examination of gender differences at Government Girls High School has illuminated the systemic nature of poverty and gender prejudice and disparity in educational settings. Indeed, the horrors experienced by millions of individuals as a result of socioeconomic and gendered inequity deepen my commitment to developing an equitable and nurturing classroom climate. In the majority of instances, equality and diversity principles will be incorporated more explicitly into my teaching practice. This, on the other hand, requires pinpoint precision in terms of each student's history and needs, as well as tailored solutions to content and methods (Onyema et al., 2020).

The first practical improvement will involve the use of differentiated instruction strategies that work to accommodate diverse learning styles and needs. This would ensure that every student has the best environment and opportunity to understand, interact, and utilize the information. For instance, depending on the topic or information being taught, it could mean that the content can be delivered verbally, visually, kinesthetically, or by any other means suitable for a specific group of learners. The examples, case studies, and experiences discussed in class should represent as many diverse backgrounds as possible to make each student feel included and valued. Breaking down the barriers

based on gender and socioeconomic status would allow me to help the students expand their capabilities and freedom. The second improvement that can be made to achieve this goal would involve more project-based learning. It tends to assist in developing problemsolving, critical thinking, and collaborative skills in students. Projects that involve students researching local issues and formulating solutions can be very empowering (Akram et al., 2020).

References

Abashidze, A.K., Inshakova, A.O., Solntsev, A.M. and Gugunskiy, D.A., (2021) 'Socioeconomic inequality as a barrier on the path of sustainable development:"institutional traps" and perspectives of overcoming them.' *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, *41*(1/2), pp.62-75.

Abboud, M. and Karam, S., (2022) 'Hypertension in the Middle East: current state, human factors, and barriers to control.' *Journal of human hypertension*, *36*(5), pp.428-436.

Ali, T.S., Ali, S.S., Nadeem, S., Memon, Z., Soofi, S., Madhani, F., Karim, Y., Mohammad, S. and Bhutta, Z.A., (2022) 'Perpetuation of gender discrimination in Pakistani society: results from a scoping review and qualitative study conducted in three provinces of Pakistan.' *BMC Women's Health, 22*(1), p.540.

Farrukh, M., Soomro, T.R., Ghazal, T.M., Alzoubi, H.M. and Alshurideh, M., (2023) 'Perspectives of online education in pakistan: Post-covid scenario.' In *The Effect of Information Technology on Business and Marketing Intelligence Systems* (pp. 519-550). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Flor, L.S., Friedman, J., Spencer, C.N., Cagney, J., Arrieta, A., Herbert, M.E., Stein, C., Mullany, E.C., Hon, J., Patwardhan, V. and Barber, R.M., (2022) 'Quantifying the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality on health, social, and economic indicators: a comprehensive review of data from March, 2020, to September, 2021.' *The Lancet, 399*(10344), pp.2381-2397.

Islam, N. and Jirattikorn, A., (2024) 'Breaking gender barriers in STEM education for achieving the SDG of quality education in Bangladesh.' *Development in Practice*, *34*(1), pp.129-135.

Johnson, O.W., Han, J.Y.C., Knight, A.L., Mortensen, S., Aung, M.T., Boyland, M. and Resurrección, B.P., (2020) 'Intersectionality and energy transitions: A review of gender, social equity and low-carbon energy.' *Energy Research & Social Science*, *70*, p.101774.

Lau, J.D., Kleiber, D., Lawless, S. and Cohen, P.J., (2021) 'Gender equality in climate policy and practice hindered by assumptions.' *Nature climate change*, *11*(3), pp.186-192.

Naz, A. and Ashraf, F., (2020) 'The relationship between higher education and women empowerment in Pakistan.' *UMT Education Review*, *3*(2), pp.65-84.

Okunade, B.A., Adediran, F.E., Balogun, O.D., Maduka, C.P., Adegoke, A.A. and Daraojimba, R.E., (2023) 'Gender policies and women's empowerment in Nigeria: an analytical review of progress and barriers.' *International Journal of Applied Research in Social Sciences*, *5*(10), pp.543-565.

Onyema, E.M., Eucheria, N.C., Obafemi, F.A., Sen, S., Atonye, F.G., Sharma, A. and Alsayed, A.O., (2020) 'Impact of Coronavirus pandemic on education.' *Journal of education and practice*, *11*(13), pp.108-121.

Osunmuyiwa, O.O. and Ahlborg, H., (2022) 'Stimulating competition, diversification, or reenforcing entrepreneurial barriers? Exploring small-scale electricity systems and genderinclusive entrepreneurship.' *Energy Research & Social Science*, *89*, p.102566.

Royce, E., (2022). *Poverty and power: The problem of structural inequality*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Were, M., Odongo, M. and Israel, C., (2021) 'Gender disparities in financial inclusion in Tanzania.

Ivinson, G., & Murphy, P. (2007). *Rethinking Single Sex Teaching*. McGraw-Hill Education.