Open Access

UNVEILING THE CHALLENGES OF GIRLS' EDUCATION IN MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

DR TABASSUM NAZ
DIRECTOR NATIONAL CURRICULUM COUNCIL, MINISTRY OF FEDERAL EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, EMAIL: tabassum1st@yahoo.com

DR SYED KALEEM IMAM
FORMER IGP/FED SECRETARY, EMAIL: skimam98@hotmail.com

MRS AMMARA NASIM
DEPUTY SECRETARY (FORMAL EDUCATION), MINISTRY OF FEDERAL EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, EMAIL: ammara.irshad@gmail.com

Abstract
Education is a fundamental right for all and the most powerful accelerator of social, economic and political development of societies, however, girls particularly in Muslim communities still face challenges to their access to education from a combination of cultural and religious norms as well as broader systemic barriers. The present study is attempted in this context, aiming at unveiling the challenges to Girls' Education in Muslim communities. The objectives of the study were to explore the challenges hindering women's access to education and perpetuate gender inequality to analyze the role of religious leaders and community in promoting women's education and to propose actionable solutions for overcoming barriers and accelerating the progress towards gender parity. The research was qualitative in nature using focused group discussion as tool for data collection. The population comprised of all major stakeholders across Islamic countries and sample size was comprised of 11 representatives of various Muslim countries. NVivo software was used for data analysis and major findings of the study were that girls' education is a major engine to drive economy while challenges of socio-cultural, economic, political including gender norms and gender disparity in decision making were identified The role of government and nongovernmental organisations and civil society was highlighted in guaranteeing gender equitable education with emphasis on women's presence in STEM fields. The major recommendations of the study were targeted reforms for girls' education including STEM education and provision of scholarships, safe transportation in conflict zones, science fairs and digital literacy projects. It was further recommended to have monitoring and evaluation system to check overall effectiveness of women's education programs ensuring that all measures are sustainable over time.
KeyWords: Girl's Education, Challenges, Muslim Countries

INTRODUCTION

The education of girls and young women is a fundamental human right and is critical to global development. Educational systems around the world agree that educating girls not only changes the course of events for individuals, but also serves as an indispensable factor in broader societal progress. Even though access to education has grown greatly throughout the world, many barriers still deter girls from receiving their rights to learning, especially in Muslim countries. These barriers frequently come from deeply entrenched social norms, economic hardships and misunderstandings about religious teachings.

Girls' education is of great significance, besides empowering the individual. Educated women are more likely to make positive contributions to their communities, give informed attention to their health and families, and participate in economic and political life. Economic benefits from investing in girls' education are substantial; poverty is decreased, as is general national development. Still, traditional customs and the structural environment within certain Muslim communities continue to keep girls from getting educated, thus perpetuating gender imbalances.

By examining existing research using a critical eye, this study attempts to explain the obstacles which prevent Muslim girls from getting an education or doing well in school. It also surveys efforts made to confront these challenges. A more comprehensive knowledge of these factors would enable people to develop strategies and policies that are more effective in promoting equal educational systems for both genders; therefore, every girl will have the chance to achieve her full potential.

In addition, the study will explore the history of Muslim women's education and its historical context, considering cases of female scholars in Islamic history who made significant contributions to scholarship themselves. Furthermore, it will discuss contemporary policies and interventions to increase female literacy rates and

educational participation in Muslim-majority countries. This review will contribute a more panoramic perspective of how education can empower and promote socio-economic change within Muslim societies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1: Barriers to Girls' Education in Muslim Communities

One of the primary barriers to the education of girls in Muslim communities is the misguided interpretation of Islamic teachings, which have often been used to justify the imposition of restrictive social norms and gender-based discrimination (Borker,2021). In many cases, conservative and devotional approaches to Islamic religious education have perpetuated the notion that women's primary role is within the domestic sphere, denying them the opportunity to pursue academic and professional aspirations (Saada & Magadlah, 2020). This narrow perspective fails to recognize the rich and diverse historical legacy of Muslim women's intellectual contributions and their active participation in various spheres of public life.

Moreover, the segregation of educational institutions along gender lines, as well as the prevalence of Urdu-medium schools has further exacerbated the exclusion of Muslim girls from mainstream educational opportunities (Fehmi, 2011). A rich body of scholarship explores the multifaceted challenges and complexities surrounding girls' education in Muslim communities. This review will examine key themes emerging from this literature, including the impact of sociocultural norms, economic factors, and the role of religious interpretations in shaping educational outcomes for Muslim girls.

2.1.1: Sociocultural Influences

Several studies highlight the influence of deeply ingrained sociocultural norms and traditions that often prioritize boys' education over girls' (Bibi & Ahmad, 2019). These norms, often rooted in patriarchal structures, can manifest in various forms, such as early marriage, restrictions on girls' mobility, and the expectation that girls primarily focus on domestic responsibilities. Such practices create significant barriers to girls' access to and continuation in education. Furthermore, research emphasizes the importance of understanding the intersectionality of these sociocultural factors with other forms of marginalization, such as poverty and geographic location, which can further compound the challenges faced by Muslim girls.

Parental attitudes play a crucial role in determining educational opportunities for girls. In many cases, parents, especially in conservative Muslim communities, may hesitate to send their daughters to school due to concerns about preserving family honor, safety, and adherence to cultural norms (Latif, 2009). This reluctance can be further exacerbated by the lack of female teachers, inadequate school infrastructure, and long travel distances to educational institutions. When communities invest in girls' education and create safe learning environments, parents become more willing to enroll their daughters in school (Aluko & Mays, 2022).

2.1.2: Economic Factors

Poverty and economic hardship play a significant role in limiting educational opportunities for girls in many Muslim communities. Families facing financial constraints may prioritize boys' education due to perceived higher economic returns, while girls are often withdrawn from school to contribute to household income or assist with domestic chores (Latif, 2009). This economic vulnerability underscores the need for targeted interventions, such as financial assistance programs and scholarships, to alleviate the financial burden on families and ensure that girls have equal access to education. In low-income Muslim-majority countries, economic barriers to education are compounded by structural inequalities within the labor market (Badrunnesha & Kwauk, 2023). Even when girls complete their education, they often face limited employment opportunities, which discourages families from investing in their daughters' schooling.

2.1.3: Religious Interpretations and Educational Practices

The interpretation and application of Islamic teachings have been a subject of ongoing debate in the context of girls' education. While Islam itself emphasizes the importance of education for both men and women, certain interpretations have been used to justify restrictive practices that limit girls' educational opportunities (Alharbi, 2014). However, it is crucial to recognize that these interpretations do not represent the entirety of Islamic thought, and many scholars and activists advocate for a more inclusive and egalitarian approach to education within Muslim communities.

Historical evidence suggests that female education has been highly valued in many Islamic societies. Prominent Muslim women, such as Aisha bint Abu Bakr and Fatima al-Fihri, played crucial roles in advancing Islamic scholarship (Fehmi, 2011). Fatima al-Fihri, for example, founded the University of al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco, one of the world's oldest educational institutions. These examples highlight the disconnect between restrictive contemporary practices and the rich history of Muslim women's intellectual contributions.

2.2: Charter of Makkah

Recognized frameworks at the international level, such as the Charter of Makkah and the Charter of Building Bridges between Islamic Schools of Thought and Sects, have played a crucial role in tackling such misconceptions. Widely respected by scholars across the many diverse schools of thought and sects of Islam, these documents reiterate Islam's insistence that women be educated — and this be both a right and a duty. Two more international covenants that answer the accusations of violence against women, and proving the need for education for women in Islam are the Charter of Makkah and the Charter of Building Bridges between Islamic

Schools of Thought and Sects. These charters, backed by esteemed scholars and religious bodies representing a range of Islamic traditions, highlight that education is not only permissible in Islam, but that it is also an inalienable right and duty of the woman.

The Charter of Makkah, which was established in 2019 under the auspices of the Muslim World League, highlights the importance of women's empowerment through education, drawing upon Islamic principles that mandate the pursuit of knowledge, regardless of one's sex (Bin Ibrahim, 2021). Likewise, the Charter of Building Bridges between Islamic Schools of Thought and Sects aims at bringing Islamic sects closer together through the reaffirmation of common denominators, most importantly the vital impact of education on intellectual and spiritual advancement of the entire community, women included.

It challenges regressive interpretations that attempt to deprive women of their rights to education and participation in public life through references to Quranic verses and Hadiths that mandate the pursuit of knowledge. My charters used to argue that denying women education contravenes Islam and impedes the cohesive functioning of society, since educating women promotes family stability, economic growth and moral development.

These charters garner international recognition, which enhances the interests of bridging traditional Islamic teaching with a contemporary understanding of gender equality and affirms the need for removing cultural obstacles that limit women's access to education. By doing so, they offer a powerful rebuttal to the stereotype that Islam is antithetical to the intellectual and professional progress of one of its core constituencies while also reinforcing the faith's empowering precept that knowledge should be sought by both women and men.

Furthermore, research has explored the diversity of educational practices within Muslim communities, including the role of madrasas and other religious schools. (Badrunnesha & Kwauk, 2023) While some madrasas provide quality education and integrate secular subjects into their curricula, others focus primarily on religious instruction, limiting students' exposure to broader academic disciplines. Understanding the nuances of these different educational settings is essential for developing effective strategies to improve girls' educational outcomes.

2.3: Islamabad Declaration

Released at the end of the International Conference on Girls' Education in Muslim Communities in January 2025, the Islamabad Declaration resolutely emphasized that girls' education was a religious duty and a social imperative. It countered misinterpretations of Islam that have been invoked in support of exclusionary policies toward girls' education, stating that such actions misused religious principles. The declaration stressed that Islam mandates education for both men and women, and any attempt to deny girls this right contradicts the core teachings of the faith (Muslim World League, 2025). Moreover, it highlighted that educated women play a crucial role in strengthening families, fostering national unity, and safeguarding societies from extremism, violence, and crime (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan, 2025).

The conference also reaffirmed global commitments to promoting girls' education through policy reforms and increased resource allocation. One of its most significant outcomes was the establishment of an international partnership platform to facilitate collaboration between religious scholars, governments, and global organizations, including UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank (Asharq Al-Awsat, 2025). Additionally, Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai urged Muslim leaders to recognize gender apartheid as a crime under international law, particularly condemning the Taliban's restrictions on Afghan girls' education, which she described as an attack on an entire generation (Reuters, 2025). This declaration marks a major step in global advocacy for girls' education in Muslim communities, reinforcing the principle that access to education is fundamental for both societal and religious progress.

In the broader context, the conference may not have achieved its goal, but it did prove one point. It showed that Muslim countries ' education levels had been lagging far behind those in other countries, especially with relation to girls. This is a harsh fact that has been realized a little late, although at least the truth is now fully acknowledged by Muslim leaders who are determined to close their ranks in the future. But whether and how fast these insights on what happened at the conference can be translated into real life for Muslim society is what really matters.

This literature evaluation furnishes a basic conceptual frame for understanding the various factors that impinge upon a Muslim girl's chances for receiving an education. Once these points are understood, then it will be possible to work more effectively on constructing a national educational system which is just and inclusive for all young women.

2.4: Theoretical Framework

According to Human Capital Theory (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964), education is an investment that enhances individuals' skills and productivity, leading to greater economic returns for both individuals and society. This theory views human beings as assets, similar to physical capital such as machinery or infrastructure, where investing in education and training results in higher economic gains (Becker, 1964). Education provides individuals with knowledge, critical thinking, and technical skills, improving their employability, increasing their earning potential, and contributing to overall economic growth. Societies that prioritize education particularly for women and girls tend to experience higher income levels, reduced poverty rates, and improved social well-being (Schultz, 1961; Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2004). Furthermore, research shows that cognitive skills acquired through education significantly contribute to national economic development (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2008).

In the context of girls' education in Muslim communities, Human Capital Theory offers a strong argument for promoting gender-inclusive education policies. Investing in girls' education develop a more literate population,

increases workforce participation, and supports economic development, ultimately helping to break the cycle of poverty (UNESCO, 2022). Educated women play a crucial role in strengthening families, stabilising societies, and contributing to economic growth, reducing dependence on social welfare programs while enhancing national productivity (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2004). By establishing a direct link between education and economic empowerment, this theory advocates that restricting girls' education, whether due to cultural norms, religious misinterpretations, or policy barriers not only violates fundamental rights but also hampers socio-economic progress. Therefore, applying Human Capital Theory to this study highlights the urgent need for policy reforms, increased resource allocation, and global collaboration to ensure that girls in Muslim communities receive the education necessary to drive societal transformation (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2008; UNESCO, 2022).

3: Objectives of the Study

➢ To explore the challenges hindering women's access to education and perpetuate gender inequality.
➢ To analyse the role of religious leaders and community in promoting women's education.
➢ To propose actionable solutions for overcoming barriers for accelerating the progress towards gender parity.

4: Rationale

This research stems from the pressing need to address the enduring gender disparity in education across the Muslim world. Cultural, religious, and societal obstacles persist in impeding women's educational access despite Islamic teachings emphasizing education for both genders. This study aims to delve into the underlying causes of these hindrances, such as misinterpretations of religious doctrines, and to scrutinize the roles of religious authorities, mosques, and community organizations in either perpetuating or challenging these societal norms.

Furthermore, although there have been positive strides in some Muslim-majority nations, like STEM initiatives in Pakistan and educational overhauls in Saudi Arabia, progress towards gender equality remains sluggish. Identifying hurdles and assessing the efficacy of these endeavors will enable us to spotlight replicable and scalable solutions that can enhance educational prospects for women.

The imperative of expediting gender equality in education is paramount not only for attaining social equity but also for unleashing the economic, political, and social capabilities of women. By presenting actionable proposals, this study strives to provide policy recommendations that can create gender parity and ensure that women's education garners central attention from governments, communities, and religious bodies. Ultimately, this research will play a role in advancing worldwide endeavors to empower women and cultivate fairer, more prosperous societies.

5: Statement of the Problem

In many Muslim communities Girls' education is still not prioritized due to some significant factors and diverse perspectives. These factors include poverty, gender violence and inferiority in key spheres of life. Erroneous interpretations of the doctrines on women's education suppress women's enlightenment. The great gap between men and women education, economic participation and political representation still persists and result in low development indicators. There is a dire need to bridge this gender gulf of the barriers to female education. Keeping in view this context present study is undertaken to identify the challenges faced by girls in pursuing their education and unfolding the underlying factors behind these challenge and propose actionable strategies and propose reforms for a brighter tomorrow for girls.

5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was qualitative in nature using focused group discussions (FGDs) as main tool for data collection since the perspective of multiple stake holders can be well documented in the focused group discussion. The population of the study included all the major stakeholders right across Islamic countries: from educators to those involved in policy, religious scholars and community leaders as well as women's rights advocates. 11 people from various Muslim countries formed part of the sample, ensuring different viewpoints on the challenges and opportunities women face in education. FGDs were held around a set of prepared questions, which were designed to ensure that discussions were both thorough with in depth exploration of the topic. This approach was chosen in order to promote dialogue, and come up with the most culturally grounded insights, an approach particularly effective at informing us about the points where religion, culture, and policy intersect in terms of girls 'learning achievements. Data was collected in January 2025 from a sample of 11 representatives from the Muslim World League, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, ambassadors, religious scholars and personnel from international Organizations such as UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) UNICEF (The United Nations Children's Fund) and the World Bank. A qualitative data analysis tool NVivo was used since it systematically organize, code, and identify patterns within the discussion transcripts. Thematic analysis of the data was done and responses were categorized into key themes such as societal norms, policy gaps, and religious interpretations affecting education. Through this structured approach a rigorous examination of emerging trends took place across the sampled countries, highlighting both similarities and differences in barriers to potential solutions for local educators. By making possible the visualization of these relationships with themes, NVivo strengthened comparative analysis as well as undergirded its validity and thoroughness. This analytical approach

made sure that the findings were evidence-based and reflected the diverse socio-political landscapes of Muslim-majority nations.

6: RESULTS
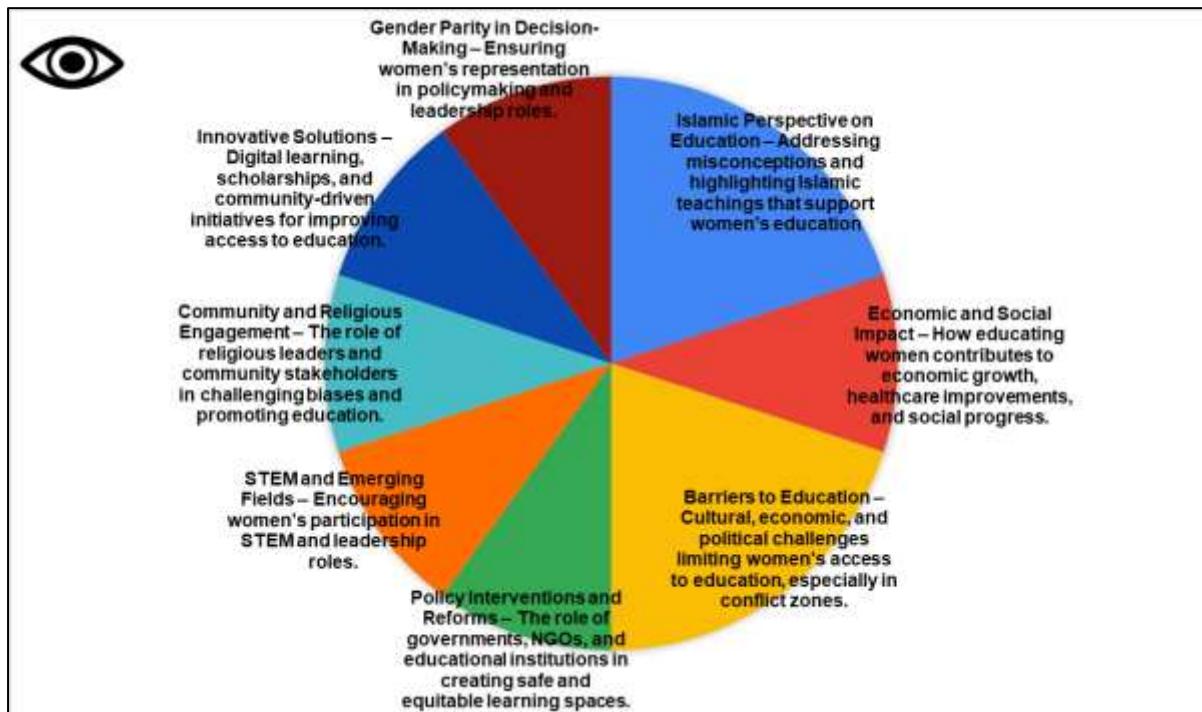
Graphical representation of themes

This pie chart highlights key aspects of women's education, including gender parity, economic impact, and cultural barriers. It also emphasizes the role of policy reforms, STEM fields, and innovative solutions in promoting equitable learning. Additionally, the chart addresses religious perspectives and community engagement in overcoming educational challenges.

The graphic illustrates the configuration of cultural values, faith-based doctrines, financial incentives, and public policy shaping female educational prospects.

TPM

6.1 Findings

1. The results of the study revealed that cultural interpretations in some areas create a host of misperceptions, the greatest obstacle is that women's education is obliterated by Islamic teachings. The inclusive nature of Islamic teachings is hence obscured. It thus became clear that for women to receive the same education as men has a tremendous impact both socially and economically.

2. Educated women make healthy decisions about their family's life which benefits the health of all its members. This connection between the education of women and general progress in society illustrates how investing in women's education is important. Numerous obstacles that stood in the way of women obtaining education came to light, especially in conflict-ridden areas.

3. The study further revealed cultural standards that favor male education, poverty which forces family members to support themselves rather than help the younger generation go to school and political uncertainty created by widespread unrest which disrupts educational work.

4. It was proposed during this research study that addressing these challenges calls for a carefully-targeted strategy tailored to the practical conditions and specific requirements of different locations, particularly in places with unsteady school systems.

5. The theme of effective policy interventions was highlighted in addressing these barriers and ensuring that women have equal access to education. Examples of successful initiatives could be giving scholarships, providing safe transportation for girls who otherwise would not travel alone at all times, or developing practical scopes of learning so that female students with specific needs may attend school on more favorable terms than their male peers.

6. Governments, NGOs, and communities working together are needed to demolish systemic obstacles to learning and create lasting solutions for women's education. In fields like STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), women remain significantly underrepresented. Initiatives aiming at girls' interest in science and technology through mentorship programs and educational opportunities can help close this gender gap. Encouraging women to pursue careers in STEM is critical for ensuring diverse perspectives in innovation, which is essential for technological and societal development.

7. The role of Community and religious leaders in shaping society's attitudes toward women's education was a key finding of the study. With their support, biases can be combatted and families may come to see the wisdom of sending their daughters to school. Putting these leaders into educational planning will make it more sympathetic and unified with the needs of women as a whole, this would represent a cultural shift towards equal learning conditions for both sexes.

8. The study further revealed that Innovative solutions, such as digital learning platforms, scholarships, and community-driven educational programs, may be effective in increasing access to education for women, especially those in marginalized or rural areas. These approaches help overcome geographical and socio-economic barriers, providing opportunities for women who might otherwise be excluded from formal education.

9. Lastly, women's underrepresentation in decision-making processes can perpetuate gender inequalities in education. It is critical that women are adequately represented in positions of leadership when they formulate educational policies adapted to women's needs. Gender parity in decision-making is an important first step toward creating educational systems which are fairer and more responsive to the requirements of women.

6.2 DISCUSSION

The surprising discovery is that people's education is not just a matter of their individual right, but also a chief engine for economic and social development. The power of educating girls and women has been confirmed by reports and studies from the World Bank, UNESCO, etc. It was claimed that this kind of investment is both good for the economy and brings in better health outcomes (World Bank, 2020; UNESCO, 2021). Studies have shown that specific policy measures -- such as gender-responsive curricula, affirmative action for women students and even legal reform -- have been effective in increasing access to higher education (World Bank, 2021; UNESCO, 2019).

There is a dire need to address both cultural barriers and structure-based obstacles in regions affected by conflict and where education systems have been disrupted. Findings from this study are in line with those of organizations such as UNICEF, which underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to support girls' education in such situations (UNICEF, 2022).

Not only Rwanda and Bangladesh -- where rates of.. the equality of female enrollments have been increasing significantly largely thanks to joint efforts between government departments and non-government organizations -- but also a number of countries have achieved considerable success in initiatives that prioritize women's education as an inalienable right. (OECD, 2019)

Moreover, the disparities in representation of women in STEM fields require creative, well-designed programs that target girls and begin early. Many studies show that mentorship will greatly up the numbers of female participants there (National Science Foundation, 2022).

The study pointed out that participation fosters women's education from the level of a whole community can be effective. (Khan, 2020) Community leaders in particular, whether they be religious or otherwise, may also have

significant impact upon as demonstrated by data from researches into; when community influencers advocate for girls' education it can lead to substantial societal attitude changes. Digital learning and local initiatives are crucial in narrowing the educational gap, especially in remote areas. Such programs utilizing technology have been effective at reaching previously unreached populations, such as shown by reports from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU, 2021).

Finally, the importance of gender representation in decision-making cannot be overstated. Several studies have demonstrated that women in management roles result in more inclusive policies which benefit both men and women. (McKinsey & Company, 2020) A holistic approach that involves community participation, policy reform and innovative solutions is necessary to promote women's education worldwide. By addressing the root causes of inequality and using existing resources, a more equitable education landscape can be created.

6.3 Conclusion

The study has stressed how crucial it is to educate women, for economic growth, social progress and Community Development. Despite the intrinsic value in educating women it is hampered by a multiplicity of obstacles including culture, economics and politics. This obstruction is particularly acute in areas affected by conflict. The backing of the community leaders, effective policy interventions and novel educational approaches are mountains that must be scaled to bridge these chasms. It is also significant in creating an inclusive learning atmosphere and bucking systemic inequities are women´s participation in STEM fields and persistent gender balance on decision-making bodies. Ultimately, the collaborative approach which sees various resources put together from governments, NGOs, communities and religious leaders is best able to build enduring roads for women´s education.

6.4 Recommendations

1. Targeted reforms that specifically lift barriers to education for women, including funding for girls' education, including STEM fields and scholarships, are recommended. To encourage young women's participation in STEM fields, no-cost coding camps and science fairs in schools, community centers, or online platforms can be organized.

2. Establish secure and reliable transport options for girls in conflict zones, such as school buses with security measures or community-led escort programs, ensuring their safety to and from school.

3. Structured digital literacy programs may be implemented in schools and local hubs, supplying necessary devices and training to bridge the technology gap for young women lacking access at home.

4. Governments and organizations should may create opportunities for women to enter leadership and voice in the policy process either through quotas or special leadership training for young girls.

5. Create robust monitoring and evaluation systems to check women's education programs for overall effectiveness, improvement–ensuring that all measures are high quality and sustainable over time.

REFERENCES

1. Ahmed, L. (1992). Women and gender in Islam: Historical roots of a modern debate. Yale University Press.
2. Alharbi, F. (2014). The development of curriculum for girls in Saudi Arabia. Creative Education, 5(24), 2021. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2014.524226
3. Aluko, F. R., & Mays, T. M. (2022). Promoting equity and inclusion: The dire state of out-of-school children in African Commonwealth countries. Tenth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning. https://doi.org/10.56059/pcf10.5400
4. Asharq Al-Awsat. (2025). Islamabad Declaration on Girls' Education launched at conclusion of global conference. Retrieved from [website source].
5. Badrunnesha, M., & Kwauk, C. (2023). Improving the quality of girls' education in madrasas in Bangladesh. Brookings Institute. https://www.brookings.edu/research/improving-the-quality-of-girls-education-in-madrasas-in-bangladesh/
6. Becker, G. S. (1964). Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education. University of Chicago Press.
7. Bibi, A., & Ahmad, W. (2019). Causes of girls' dropout from primary schools in Tehsil Bahrain District Swat, KPK Pakistan. Asian Journal of Contemporary Education, 3(1), 44–58. https://doi.org/10.18488/journal.137.2019.31.44.58
8. Bin Ibrahim, A. (2021). Islamic perspectives on women's education and contemporary challenges. International Islamic Studies Press.
9. Borker, H. (2021a). Inside a residential girls' madrasa in India. University of Chicago Press.
10. Borker, H. (2021b). Inside a residential girls' madrasa in India. Current Anthropology, 62(3), 363. https://doi.org/10.1086/714346
11. Career education for Muslim girls: Developing culturally sensitive provision. (n.d.). https://doi.org/10.1177/103841620401300107
12. Education in Islam—Myths and truths. (n.d.). https://doi.org/10.1086/504818
13. Fehmi, S. A. (2011). The multicultural deficit and emancipation of Indian Muslim women. Social Change, 41(4), 523–540. https://doi.org/10.1177/004908571104100402

14. Goody, J. (2006). The theft of history. Cambridge University Press.

15. Hanushek, E. A., & Woessmann, L. (2008). The role of cognitive skills in economic development. Journal of Economic Literature, 46(3), 607–668.

16. International Telecommunication Union. (2021). Digital learning: Opportunities and challenges.

17. Islam, M. S. (2016). Importance of girls' education as a right: A legal study from an Islamic approach. Beijing Law Review, 7(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.4236/blr.2016.71001

18. Khan, S. (2020). The role of religious leaders in promoting girls' education. Journal of Education and Development.

19. Latif, A. (2009). A critical analysis of school enrollment and literacy rates of girls and women in Pakistan. Educational Studies, 45(5), 424–439. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131940903190477

20. Makdisi, G. (1981). The rise of colleges: Institutions of learning in Islam and the West. Edinburgh University Press.

21. McKinsey & Company. (2021). The impact of education on economic growth and gender equity.

22. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. (2025). Curtain raiser: Islamabad to host pioneering global summit on girls' education in Muslim communities. Retrieved from [website source].

23. Muslim World League. (2025). Islamabad Declaration on Girls' Education. Retrieved from [website source].

24. National Science Foundation. (2022). Women, minorities, and persons with disabilities in science and engineering.

25. OECD. (2019). Education at a glance: Gender differences in education.

26. Psacharopoulos, G., & Patrinos, H. A. (2004). Returns to investment in education: A further update. Education Economics, 12(2), 111–134.

27. Reuters. (2025). Malala Yousafzai urges Muslim leaders to back gender apartheid legal push. Retrieved from [website source].

28. Saada, N., & Magadlah, H. (2020). The meanings and possible implications of critical Islamic religious education. British Journal of Religious Education, 43(2), 206–222. https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2020.1785844

29. Schultz, T. W. (1961). Investment in human capital. The American Economic Review, 51(1), 1–17.

30. Swimming against the tide: Educational problems and coping strategies of rural female students in Ethiopia. (n.d.). https://doi.org/10.1353/eas.2004.0008

31. UNESCO. (2021). Global education monitoring report: Gender review.

32. UNESCO. (2022). The importance of investing in girls' education. Retrieved from https://www.unesco.org

33. UNICEF. (2022). Education under attack: Global report.

34. Women's education in the Muslim world. (n.d.). https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12142

35. World Bank. (2020). The power of education: How education can drive economic growth.

36. Writing an introduction. (n.d.). https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139035347.009