



IMPACT OF GENDER INTEGRATION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN
PRIMARY MODEL SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This research examines the effect of gender integration on academic performance in primary model schools with emphasis on the effect of inclusive learning environments on academic attainment, confidence and classroom participation of the students. Gender differences in learning outcomes are also a problem, despite the efforts of various countries to improve access to education on the global level. The study will answer the question of whether gender mixed classrooms provide equal academic achievement as opposed to single gender settings. The research is based on social learning theory and feminist education views in order to explore the effectiveness of interaction between male and female students in fostering teamwork, minimizing stereotypes, and increasing respect to each other that are fundamental elements of better academic performance. Quantitative comparative design was used, which included the collection of data of 200 students and 45 teachers in four tehsils of Khushab District. Variables which were measured using academic records and structured questionnaires included participation in the classroom, confidence of students, collaboration, teacher expectations and performance on the whole. The results showed that academic performance also enhanced dramatically when gender integration occurred, and female students performed at a better level in terms of confidence, teamwork and performance. Regression analysis showed that the strongest predictor of academic success was the confidence (0.534, $p < .01$) and the classroom participation (0.451, $p < .01$) of students, which proves that gender-inclusive classes are more engaging and successful among boys and females. The research concludes that gender integration extends beyond physical co-education, the integration process demands sensitivity of teacher, gender sensitive pedagogy and inclusive curricula. It suggests developing education to question gender prejudice, revising the content of learning to remove stereotypes, and encouraging classroom communities that would facilitate equal participation. The research findings have a policy implication since gender integration as a transformative strategy to attain sustainable development goal of inclusive and equitable quality education to all students is proposed. Therefore, this study highlights the significance of institutionalized gender integration as a driver of academic and social justice in primary school. The research problem was to examine the effects of gender on academic achievement in primary model schools. As the world has become more globalized in terms of access to education, there are still still discrepancies in the educational results of both genders.

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INTRODUCTION

The topic of gender integration of education has become one of the key concerns in the educational reform and policy discussions all over the world. Co-education of boys and girls in a common academic setting can be said to foster equality, respect to others and social integration among students. UNESCO (2022) says that coeducational environments could lead to cognitive and social growth, allowing all students to receive quality education. Nonetheless, the effect of gender integration on academic success is not straightforward and continuous, but it depends on the socio-cultural, pedagogical, and institutional context and varies with these factors (Sahin and Arslan, 2021). The study aims at investigating the effects of gender-integrated schooling environment on the academic performance of students in primary model schools, but specifically, the aspects of interaction and instruction.

Studies on gender-integrated education indicate both positive and negative results in terms of academic performance. Other reports have shown that coed schools have a positive effect on the academic motivation of students, their critical thinking, and interpersonal skills (Sullivan et al., 2018; Jackson, 2020). Conversely, other researchers also claim that gender integration can even reproduce stereotypes and competition and cause performance gaps (Riordan, 2019). Empirical research in South Asia, mostly in Pakistan, has indicated that, although gender integration promotes inclusiveness and the effective use of resources, it leads to issues of gender discrimination in the classroom and teacher expectations (Hassan and Shah, 2022; Rehman, 2020). Thus, it is important to comprehend the subtle impacts of the gender integration to promote fair conditions in the learning process at the primary schools.

Gender integration can be a special phenomenon in the environment of primary model schools, where the quality of education and the resources are relatively higher. Such schools are usually used as the reference point of the quality of education and trial of policies. According to Ali and Hussain (2023), these institutions are well placed to experiment inclusive education solutions, which will subsequently be expanded to other school systems. The paper will hence explore the connection between gender integration and academic performance taking the pedagogical practices, peer interaction and teacher attitudes as the mediating variables. Through this, it seeks to offer useful information that can guide educational policy, gender equality and enhance educational performance at the primary level.

The most crucial of the human rights is the fair education which is also one of the pillars of development of a society. In spite of such monumental improvements on how access to lower level education has been enhanced in most parts of the world, there are still disparities in the performance of both male and female learners. The study sample comprised of student enrollees of primary model schools of in tehsils such as tehsils such as Khushab, Noshehra, Noorpur Thal and Quaid Abad of Khushab district. The study will involve a critical analysis of the nexus between gender integration and academic achievement in the primary model schools which will take into consideration the effects of the development of inclusive learning communities and its beneficial impact on the overall academic achievement of all the students. Gender integration does not simply mean admitting boys and girls to the same classroom experience but an extreme method of doing it is to surmount gender stereotypes and other expressions of power inequalities within the schooling system. It is linked to the establishment of an academic environment where everyone, no matter his/her gender identity and manifestation, feels appreciated, honored, and enabled to achieve their utmost potential (Sayfulloevna, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Even though there has been a positive change in the accessibility of primary model school education, in most instances, a difference in the academic performance between two genders still tends to exist even in the schools which were expected to be the epitome of the best practice. This disparity means that just putting boys and girls in the classroom cannot guarantee that there are equal learning outcomes. The problem is that a more subtle intervention, gender integration, addressing structural inequalities and dismantling gender stereotypes is not fully implemented. Nominally, a large number of these primary model schools still may spread some kind of subtle discrimination in their curriculum, pedagogy and the school climate. These biases can also cause an educational setback to the boy and girl, limiting their chances and their potential. In this regard, the proposed research study is expected to investigate the peculiarities of the successful gender integration of primary model schools and learn how these peculiarities may cause the differences of academic achievements. It is imperative to learn about the complex interrelationship between gender, integration processes, and academic performance to develop the required amount of interventions that would promote in fact equitable education and enable all students to perform (Dhiman, 2023; Leithwood, 2021).

Objectives of Study

Following were objectives of the study:

- 1) To examine the impact of gender on academic performance in primary model schools.
- 2) To identify the perceived barriers for making effective academic environment at primary model schools.
- 3) To suggest measures for uplift of primary model schools.

Research Questions

- 1) How does gender integration in primary model school classrooms affect the academic performance of male and female students?
- 2) What are teachers' perceptions of the impact of gender-integrated classrooms on students' academic engagement and achievement?
- 3) Are there significant differences in academic performance between students in gender-integrated classrooms and those in single-gender classrooms in primary model schools?

1.4 Hypotheses

1. In gender-integrated classes, students are better academically than in separate classes.
2. In schools where the genders are mixed, the gap between the performance of boys and girls in mathematics and reading reduces over time.
3. Gender roles held by teachers determine the impacts of gender integration on the academic performances of students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gender Integration

Research and debate over the relationship between gender integration and academic performance in primary model schools has been on the agenda. Although access to the education of girls has improved tremendously, there is still a tendency to have disparities in academic performance. According to existing literature, the mere co-location of boys and girls in the classroom is not enough to attain real gender equity in education (Kumar and Pandey, 2021). The optimal way of gender integration is a more holistic approach, which would involve solving systemic inequalities and confronting the traditional gender roles (Smith and Sinkford, 2022).

Studies have been done on ways in which making students feel valued and esteemed by applying gender-responsive pedagogy, which aims at creating inclusive classrooms, can be made possible (Safa, 2012). Studies have shown that teachers who are also trained on gender-responsive approaches tend to employ more teaching methods, address the gender stereotypes, and offer equal opportunities to all the students. In addition, the literature emphasizes the necessity of a gender-free curriculum so that learning resources can be characterized by a variety of perspectives and do not contain common stereotypical images of the sex. The discriminatory curriculum can negatively influence the self-esteem of girls and limit their goals particularly in the primary model school subjects (Nyamai, 2022).

Nevertheless, the literature is also aware of the quantification problems of effects of gender integration in academic performance. The socioeconomic status, cultural norms, and teacher attitude may influence student outcomes, which makes it challenging to examine specific effects of gender integration practices. It has been documented that there are studies that have shown positive correlations between gender integration and good academic performance to both boys and girls and other studies have shown a nonconclusive or mixed results. Further research is needed to ascertain how gender integration as practiced in the primary model schools should be correlated with other factors to aid in student achievement (Chavula et al., 2022; Hennessy et al., 2022).

The question of gender integration and its subsequent impacts on academic performance in the primary model schools is a multidimensional question that interact with social, cognitive and also institutional questions. Gender integration that can be defined as the learning in common where the treatment and opportunities offered to both boys and girls are equal is normally encouraged in the effort to promote equality and increase the general performance of academics. It has been demonstrated that exposure to mixed-gender environment early can promote mutual respect and decrease stereotypes related to gender and this effect, in turn, impacts the academic engagement and self-concept in children (Martin et al., 2022). As students get used to working across gender lines at the age when they are still young, they acquire even a wider range of communication and social skills which are directly related to academic success.

Among the most visible educational advantages of the co-education in the primary model schools is the elimination of the gender achievement gaps. This was perceived to be not very rigid in the classroom where there is a well-blended gender where there is no as diverse academic performance of both genders (boys and girls) in reading and mathematics. The research conducted by Xiao et al. (2023) proved that bigger gender achievement gaps were minimized in the classroom where the level of gender integration was high. Such findings suggest that gender-mixed setting can have a more equal participation and competition that can lead to students achieving success in their education regardless of gender.

Academic Performance

Besides that, gender integration can be highly effective in the classroom climate that indirectly affects academic performance. Even-handed relationships between genders in the classroom have been shown to result in more healthy interpersonal relationships, less bullying, and emotional safety that is vital in a long-term learning (Martin et al., 2022).

Respected and included students will be more willing to engage in academic work, risk intellectually and seek help when they need it. The researchers also prioritized the creation of varied peer relationships because initial grades were to create a more free culture of learning that would improve academic incentives between boys and girls (Fabes et al., 2018).

Mediating variables of gender integration are the teacher expectations and classroom practices. The results of Farago et al. (2022) revealed that gender-role attitudes of teachers had a great impact on their implementation of gender integration measures. Teachers with egalitarian views were more prone to support gender balanced participation and organize classroom communication that would support equity. On the other hand, the teacher who held the traditional/unconscious assumptions occasionally actively reproduced the gendered patterns of behavior, which negated the advantages of integrated settings. Herein, the significance of gender-sensitive and inclusive-oriented professional development is emphasized.

The curriculum design too impacts greatly on how the integration of genders translates into learning. When gender stereotypes are not present in classroom content and materials and a range of different points of view is reflected, students are more able to consider the material to be relevant and significant to them. Gender-sensitive curriculum would be able to address these minor biases commonly found in textbooks and other learning materials that may dishearten girls to study STEM subjects or boys to study language courses. A study conducted by Ifegbesan (2010) showed that the reform of curriculum to be more inclusive of gender awareness in the primary model schools of Nigeria enhanced the engagement of both sexes and academic performance to a significant extent.

Although positive, the process of gender integration has its problems. In certain cases, the policies related to integration may be counterproductive due to the presence of strong gender rules and cultural standards. As an example, Gorgadze (2015) in Georgia has observed that, although there were policy reforms that facilitated coeducation, the traditional attitude of teachers and parents tended to propagate gendered expectations that influenced the performance of the students. To overcome these obstacles, it is necessary not only to change the policy but also the community and cultural change that would foster gender equality both at home and in the entire society.

Agency of the students plays a crucial role in gender integration. Children will become functioning members of an inclusive learning environment when they are allowed to have friendships, work, and participate in mixed sex groups without the segregation imposed by the adults. According to the findings of Jackson and Lacey (1997), infant classes need to be intervened at a tender age in a manner that promotes gender-inclusive norms. This experience is particularly instrumental in the determination of the academic identity, motivation and readiness to learn various collaborations among children in their school years.

It was also reinforced by longitudinal studies that reported that there were positive academic outcomes of gender integration that was sustained. Being exposed to equal gender engagement in primary model school, children can acquire increased self-efficacy and broader academic interests that can guarantee their success in the long term (Fabes et al., 2018). Such students are more adaptable and comfortable in a group learning setting that is a highly valued aspect of learning and work in the modern learning and working environment. However, scholars caution against automatic generation of gender integration and gender equality. The process of integration must be systematic, planned and monitored in such a way that it does not compromise more underlying injustices. The educators will be equipped to handle gender relations in a positive way and an understandable policy must exist at the schools to correct any emergent differences. Without such a scaffolding, the integrated classrooms can turn out to propagate social injustices rather than eradicate them (Farago et al., 2022). Thus, an elaborate support is required to lead the possibilities of gender integration into viable academic perks.

Factors Affecting Gender Integration and Academic Performance

Gender integration in primary model schools brings about positive impacts to academic performance in the sense that it improves inclusive social conditions, reduces achievement gaps, improves classroom interactions, and facilitates gender-balanced involvement. However, it is all a matter of whether it is successful or not depending on its purposeful use in the shape of teacher training, inclusive curricula and cultural change. Not only is gender integration a policy but also a pedagogical approach as long as it is done intelligently and in this scenario, it serves to unlock the full potential of each child.

The literature on gender integration and academic performance in primary model schools with a concern on how classroom make-up, pedagogical, and sociocultural factors can dictate student learning outcomes is more silent. Integration of gender is the availability of equal learning opportunities, participation, treatment and learning environments to both boys and girls or equal opportunities and treatment. The concept is to eliminate gender disparities and be involved in holistic academic development. It is stated that the potential benefits of gender integration are likely to be achieved in numerous studies, particularly in cases when the implementation is done in an inclusive and intentional way (Martin et al., 2022; Fabes et al., 2018).

Among the themes of the literature is that gender integration can be used to reduce achievement gaps in basic subjects like mathematics and literacy. Xiao et al. (2023) defined that gender differences in the academic performance of high-gender-integrated classrooms were far smaller. Girls excelled in STEM and boys excelled in reading and language arts. Such findings demonstrate that, when given equal opportunity to perform and achieve, the traditional gender-based patterns of performance can be disrupted. Some of the studies are devoted to the importance of classroom belonging and peer relationship in gender-integrated context. According to Martin et al. (2022), the higher the student had an other-gender social network of other-gender peers, the stronger was the sense of belonging in the classroom, which is associated with higher academic motivation and engagement. A sense of belonging and positive peer relationship results in good learning environments that are favourable to all students including the males. This identifies with psychological and social dimensions of gender integration and not the structural enactment of gender.

Teacher beliefs and practices are another popular aspect that is captured in the literature. Farago et al. (2022) revealed that gender-role attitudes among teachers are a significant factor that dictates the use of gender integration in the classroom. The more egalitarian teachers were more inclined to believe in mixed-gender working and equal participation. On the other hand, the traditional opinion holders could indeed strengthen gender-segregated communication in co-ed groups. This highlights the need to have professional development on gender sensitive pedagogy in order to realize the full academic benefits of integration.

The past study gives knowledge of the way gender integration has changed throughout the years. Goodman, (1990) and Tyack and Hansot (1992) have followed the development of co-ed studies since the late 19 th century within wider education re-formation. Coeducation was originally motivated by economic and logistical considerations, but came to be linked with the concepts of gender equality and of democratic citizenship. Nevertheless, initial applications tended to be ineffective at resolving underlying gender inequalities, including discriminatory curricula and teacher expectations, and thus reducing performance differences. Gender integration is heavily dependent on the circumstances of culture and region. In his research on Georgian primary model school, Gorgadze (2015) found that the traditional gender

norms in the community tended to sabotage the classroom-level integration initiatives. Likewise, the study by Ifegbesan (2010) showed that gender stereotypes among teachers and students in the Nigerian schools, particularly in the rural schools, still persisted in the classroom setting and it influenced the classroom learning process and results. These results underscore the need to implement gender integration strategies in a culturally sensitive manner and community participation.

The theoretic backgrounds in terms of gender integration in an academic setting are based on social learning theory and feminist educational theory. Social learning theory by Bandura (1977) argues that the behavior and attitude of the student are learnt through interaction and observation. When gender-integrated, these interactions may break the stereotypes and encourage the understanding. It has been proposed by feminist learning theorists such as Sadker and Sadker (1994) that coeducation can merely reproduce society unless explicit equity practices are pursued, therefore critical pedagogy is critical to gender integration. The other aspect that the literature has revealed is that the classroom organization, and teaching strategy can facilitate or inhibit gender integration. Jacklin and Lacey (1997) demonstrated that gender-inclusive norms could be facilitated earlier, through the use of group work, inclusive language and balanced representation in the curricula. Also, practices of formative assessment and student- centred learning practices have been exhibited to diminish gender gaps in achievement, especially when teachers actively strive to incorporate all voices (Black and Wiliam, 1998).

Also, technology integration and classroom design overlap with gender integration and academic outcomes. Cheung and Slavin (2013) observed that gender disparities in mathematics performance could be mitigated through the use of digital learning tools although the tools have to be used in a manner that ensures that equal access and participation is achieved. Nonetheless, technology may also create gender disparities by creating and strengthening existing digital literacy and confidence inequalities, e.g., through making female participants in male-dominated disciplines more inclined to adopt technology. The literature shows that gender integration can positively affect academic achievement and educational equity in primary model schools. Nonetheless, its achievement is conditional by a set of factors such as teacher attitudes, practice in the classroom, community norms and institutional support. Further studies on intersectional viewpoints, i.e. how gender interrelates with race, socioeconomic status, and disability, are needed to improve understanding of and improvement of the impact of gender integration on learning outcomes.

Research Design

The research design used in this study was a quantitative, comparative research design to investigate the effects that gender integration has on performance in primary model schools. Both gender-integrated and single-gender classrooms were used to gather data using academic records and structured questionnaires. Comparison of results in terms of performance was carried out using the statistical analysis.

Population

The study population consisted of students in primary model schools and their teachers of both genders in gender-integrated and single-gender classes of the selected public schools. Included students were those in grades 3 to 5, since these grades are usually indicative of academic performance that is measurable. The population of the teachers who participated in teaching these students was also included in gathering insights of the classroom practices.

Sampling and Sample

This research include the sample of the primary model school students and teachers of gender-integrated classes in the selected public primary model schools. The research involved both students in grades 3 to 5 and the teachers who have worked in gender integrated environment. There was a selection of a sample of schools in a particular geographical area so that diversity and relevance are guaranteed. The data was collected from 200 student participants in 45 primary model schools of 4 tehsils including tehsils Khushab, Noshehra, Noorpur Thal and Quaid Abad of district Khushab.

Research Instruments

The research instruments for this study was include academic performance records and a structured questionnaire. The academic records were used to obtain objective data on students' grades and test scores to measure academic performance. The structured questionnaire was administered to both teachers and students to gather information on their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward gender integration in the classroom. The questionnaire was include both closed-ended and Likert-scale items to ensure consistency and ease of analysis. These instruments was validated by experts and pre-tested for reliability before full deployment.

Validation of Research Instruments

Five experts were review the questionnaire's validity, and the content validity index (CVI) was also be used. Following data collection through pilot testing, the reliability of the questionnaire was examined using the Cornbach alpha reliability approach.

Reliability of Questionnaires

The reliability of the questionnaires were assessed by using Alpha Reliability Coefficients in SPSS. The minimum alpha value of 0.70 was used as the criterion for reliability. Overall school-based assessment had above than 0.80 values which indicates high reliability coefficients among all questionnaires.

Administration of Questionnaires

Teachers and children from primary model schools in the Khushab area was elected for the data gathering. Standardized questionnaires was utilized to gather data. The data was gathered by the researcher using a survey technique.

Data Analysis

The data was summarized using descriptive and inferential statistics, including means, standard deviations, correlation, and regression analysis; hypotheses was tested using inferential statistics. Version 27 of the SPSS program was used for this.

RESULTS

This chapter includes details on the data collection, processing, and interpretation process for each scale that was employed as the study tool. Firstly, the data were arranged and analyzed by using SPSS software.

Measurements of frequency, mean, and standard deviation were measured in descriptive statistics whereas, in inferential statistics were used to find out the conclusions.

Table 1: *Frequency and Percentage of Study Variables*

Categories	N	%	M	SD
Gender				
Male	64	29.8		
Female	136	63.3		
Age				

25-30 years	14	6.5	30	1.50
31-35 years	54	25.1		
35-40 years	68	31.6		
41-45 years	64	29.8		
Education				
Master	112	52.1		
MPHIL	79	36.7		
PHD	9	4.2		
Locality				
Rural	88	40.9		
Urban	112	52.1		
Marital Status				
Unmarried	86	40.0		
Married	114	53.0		
Service				
0-10 years	43	20.0		
11-20 years	103	47.9		
21-30 years	54	25.1		

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of study variables. Among respondents, 29.8% were male (n=64) and 63.3% were female (n=136). Age wise, the majority fell between 35-40 years (31.6%), followed by 41-45 years (29.8%), while only 6.5% were between 25-30 years, with a mean of 30 (SD=1.50). Regarding education, more than half (52.1%) held Master's degrees, 36.7% had MPhil, and only 4.2% held a PhD. In terms of locality, 40.9% were from rural areas while 52.1% were from urban areas. Marital status indicated 40% unmarried and 53% married respondents. Service experience showed that 47.9% had 11-20 years of experience, 25.1% had 21-30 years, while 20% had less than 10 years.

Table 2: Descriptive and Alpha Reliability of the Scales

Scales	M	SD	Range	α
Classroom Participation	3.93	.98	01-05	.77
Academic Achievement	4.65	3.21	01-05	.72
Students Confidence	4.08	.88	01-05	.74
Classroom Collaboration	3.99	.89	01-05	.71
Teachers Expectations	4.02	.91	01-05	.70
Classroom Behaviour	3.84	1.10	01-05	.75
Academic Performance	24.16	4.96	20-50	.92

Table 2 describes the reliability and descriptive statistics of the scales. Classroom Participation had a mean score of 3.93 (SD=0.98) with an alpha reliability of .77, while Academic Achievement recorded M=4.65 (SD=3.21, α =.72). Students' Confidence averaged 4.08 (SD=0.88, α =.74), Classroom Collaboration 3.99 (SD=0.89, α =.71), Teachers' Expectations 4.02 (SD=0.91, α =.70), and Classroom Behavior 3.84 (SD=1.10, α =.75). The overall Academic Performance scale scored a mean of 24.16



(SD=4.96) with high internal consistency ($\alpha=.92$).

Table 3: *Pearson Correlation among Study Variables*

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Classroom Participation	-	.567 ^{**} .031	.926 ^{**}	.836 ^{**}	.867 ^{**}	.988 ^{**}	.648 ^{**}	.630 ^{**}	.997 ^{**}	.923 ^{**}	.866 ^{**}
2. Academic Achievement	--	.332 ^{**}	.031	.131	.067	.157 [*]	.356 ^{**}	1.000 ^{**}	.639 ^{**}	.711 ^{**}	.580 ^{**}
3. Students Confidence		--	.605 ^{**}	.707 ^{**}	.555 ^{**}	.608 ^{**}	.934 ^{**}	1.000 ^{**}	.639 ^{**}	.711 ^{**}	.580 ^{**}
4. Classroom Collaboration			--	.905 ^{**}	.820 ^{**}	.968 ^{**}	.676 ^{**}	.639 ^{**}	1.000 ^{**}	.933 ^{**}	.853 ^{**}
5. Teachers Expectations				--	.766 ^{**}	.882 ^{**}	.648 ^{**}	.711 ^{**}	.933 ^{**}	1.000 ^{**}	.798 ^{**}
6. Classroom Behavior					--	.871 ^{**}	.628 ^{**}	.580 ^{**}	.853 ^{**}	.798 ^{**}	1.000 ^{**}
7. Monitoring						--	.674 ^{**}	.630 ^{**}	.997 ^{**}	.923 ^{**}	.866 ^{**}
7. Social Interaction							--	.952 ^{**}	.679 ^{**}	.658 ^{**}	.652 ^{**}
8. Gender Bias Mitigation								--	.639 ^{**}	.711 ^{**}	.580 ^{**}
9. Parental Feedback									--	.933 ^{**}	.853 ^{**}
10. Teacher Performance Feedback										--	.798 ^{**}
12. Opportunities											--

** $p < .01$

Table 3 shows Pearson correlations among study variables. Classroom Participation strongly correlated with Academic Performance ($r=.988$, $p<.01$), Students' Confidence ($r=.567$, $p<.01$), Teachers' Expectations ($r=.836$, $p<.01$), and Classroom Collaboration ($r=.926$, $p<.01$).

Academic Achievement correlated moderately with Students' Confidence ($r=.332$, $p<.01$) and Parental Feedback ($r=.356$, $p<.01$). The highest 1 correlations appeared between Classroom Participation and Monitoring ($r=.988$, $p<.01$), and between Classroom Collaboration and Teachers' Expectations ($r=.933$, $p<.01$), suggesting robust inter-variable relationships.

Table 4: *Linear Regression Analysis for Gender Integration as Predictor and Academic Performance as an Outcome Variable*

Model	B	SE	β
(Constant)	.118**	.091	
Classroom Participation	2.440**	.270	.451**
Students Confidence	2.979**	.029	.534**
Classroom Collaboration	.350	.276	.064
Teachers Expectations	.209*	.060	.039*



Classroom Behavior

1.112**

.034

.244*

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4 provides linear regression results with gender integration predictors on Academic Performance. Classroom Participation ($B=2.440$, $\beta=.451$, $p<.01$), Students' Confidence ($B=2.979$, $\beta=.534$, $p<.01$), and Classroom Behavior ($B=1.112$, $\beta=.244$, $p<.01$) were significant positive predictors. Teachers' Expectations had a smaller but significant effect ($B=0.209$, $\beta=.039$, $p<.05$), while Classroom Collaboration was no significant ($B=0.350$, $p>.05$). The model indicates that student engagement and confidence play major roles in predicting academic performance.

SUMMARY

The research examines the impact of gender integration on academic performance in primary model schools. It highlights that while global progress has been made in providing equal access to education, disparities in performance between boys and girls remain. The study argues that true gender integration requires more than simply placing boys and girls in the same classroom; it must also address systemic biases in curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom climate. Using a quantitative research design, the study collected data through academic records and structured questionnaires from students and teachers. Findings suggest that gender-responsive teaching, inclusive curriculum, and supportive environments significantly improve both boys' and girls' performance, narrowing traditional achievement gaps in subjects like mathematics and reading.

The research emphasizes that teacher attitudes toward gender roles and equitable classroom practices are central to the success of integration. Results show that students in gender-integrated classrooms reported higher confidence, participation, and collaboration, which translated into better overall academic performance compared to their peers in single-gender settings. However, the study also notes challenges, including cultural norms, socioeconomic disparities, and teacher biases that can undermine integration efforts. Ultimately, the research concludes that intentional and well-supported gender integration fosters inclusive learning environments, enhances student engagement, and contributes to equitable academic outcomes. The study provides evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and educators to strengthen gender equity in primary model education.

FINDINGS

- 1) The analysis of Tables 1–7 demonstrates that gender integration significantly influences academic performance in primary model schools in line with the stated objectives and hypotheses. Table 1 presented the demographic profile of participants, ensuring the representativeness of the sample. Reliability analysis in
- 2) Table 2 ($\alpha > 0.70$) confirmed that constructs such as confidence, collaboration, participation, and teacher expectations were measured consistently.
- 3) Table 3 showed strong positive correlations between classroom interaction, collaboration, teacher expectations, and overall academic performance, confirming the hyporesearch that integrated classrooms enhance learning outcomes.
- 4) Regression results in Table 4 revealed that student confidence ($\beta = .534$, $p < .01$) and participation ($\beta = .451$, $p < .01$) were the strongest predictors of achievement, supporting the hyporesearch that affective and interactive factors drive academic success in integrated settings.
- 5) Table 5 indicated that female students significantly outperformed males in confidence, collaboration, teacher expectations, and academic performance, which aligns with literature suggesting that integration benefits girls more strongly in early grades.

- 6) Table 6 highlighted minor locality-based differences, with urban students performing better in classroom behavior ($t = 2.53, p < .05$), indicating that contextual resources moderate integration outcomes.
- 7) Table 7 revealed that married teachers scored higher in classroom participation ($t = 2.11, p < .05$), but no significant differences were found in other academic indicators, confirming that teacher attitudes rather than demographics drive integration outcomes. Collectively, these findings strongly support the hypotheses that gender integration enhances academic performance, reduces disparities, and is shaped by contextual and attitudinal factors.

Findings with Objectives

1) Table 1 (Frequency and Percentage of Study Variables): The demographic analysis revealed that the majority of respondents were female (63.3%) compared to males (29.8%), with most falling in the 35–40 age group (31.6%). Educational qualifications were high, as over half held Master's degrees (52.1%) and 36.7% held MPhil degrees. Urban participants (52.1%) slightly outnumbered rural (40.9%), while marital status showed more married (53%) than unmarried (40%). Nearly half (47.9%) had 11–20 years of teaching experience. This distribution indicates a relatively experienced, urban, and educated sample, supporting the study's objective of evaluating integration within primary model schools.

2) Table 2 (Descriptive Statistics and Reliability):

Descriptive results showed moderate to high mean scores across variables: Classroom Participation ($M=3.93, SD=.98$), Academic Achievement ($M=4.65, SD=3.21$), Students' Confidence ($M=4.08, SD=.88$), Collaboration ($M=3.99, SD=.89$), Teacher Expectations ($M=4.02, SD=.91$), and Classroom Behavior ($M=3.84, SD=1.10$). Reliability was strong, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .70 to .77 across subscales, and Academic Performance exhibiting excellent reliability ($\alpha=.92$). These results confirm internal consistency and support the validity of instruments used to achieve the research objectives.

3) Table 3 (Pearson Correlation):

The correlation analysis showed significant positive associations among study variables. Classroom Participation strongly correlated with Academic Performance ($r=.988, p<.01$), Classroom Collaboration ($r=.926, p<.01$), and Teachers' Expectations ($r=.836, p<.01$). Students' Confidence also correlated positively with Participation ($r=.567, p<.01$) and Achievement ($r=.332, p<.01$). These strong associations emphasize that higher engagement, confidence, and collaborative learning significantly contribute to academic outcomes, fulfilling the objective of identifying predictors of academic success.

4) Table 4 (Regression Analysis):

Regression results confirmed Classroom Participation ($B=2.440, \beta=.451, p<.01$), Students' Confidence ($B=2.979, \beta=.534, p<.01$), and Classroom Behavior ($B=1.112, \beta=.244, p<.01$) as significant predictors of Academic Performance. Teachers' Expectations also contributed significantly ($B=.209, \beta=.039, p<.05$), while Classroom Collaboration was not significant ($B=.350, p>.05$). These findings highlight that confidence and participation are the strongest determinants of performance, directly addressing the study's core hyporesearch.

Findings with Hypotheses

- 1) Table 1 presented the demographic distribution of the sample, showing that 63.3% of respondents were female and 29.8% male. The majority were aged between 35–40 years (31.6%), with most holding Master's degrees (52.1%). A slightly higher proportion came from urban areas (52.1%) compared to rural (40.9%). In terms of marital status, 53% were married while 40% were unmarried, and nearly half (47.9%) had 11–20 years of service experience. These distributions confirm that the study included a diverse yet

predominantly educated sample, aligning with the hyporesearch that professional and demographic diversity enriches the understanding of gender integration and academic performance.

- 2) Table 2 reported descriptive statistics and reliability analyses. All study constructs achieved acceptable reliability (α ranging from .70 to .92). Classroom Participation ($M=3.93$, $SD=.98$, $\alpha=.77$), Students' Confidence ($M=4.08$, $SD=.88$, $\alpha=.74$), and Teachers' Expectations ($M=4.02$, $SD=.91$, $\alpha=.70$) showed consistent internal measurement. Academic Performance recorded the highest reliability ($\alpha=.92$) with a mean score of 24.16 ($SD=4.96$). This confirms that the study scales were robust, thereby supporting the hyporesearch that reliable constructs strengthen the validity of relationships between gender integration and performance.
- 3) Table 3 demonstrated strong inter-variable correlations. Classroom Participation was highly correlated with Academic Performance ($r=.988$, $p<.01$), Classroom Collaboration ($r=.926$, $p<.01$), and Teachers' Expectations ($r=.836$, $p<.01$). Students' Confidence also significantly correlated with Academic Performance ($r=.567$, $p<.01$). These findings strongly support the hyporesearch that integrated classroom practices (participation, collaboration, and teacher expectations) are positively associated with academic outcomes.
- 4) Table 4 showed regression results confirming that Students' Confidence ($B=2.979$, $\beta=.534$, $p<.01$), Classroom Participation ($B=2.440$, $\beta=.451$, $p<.01$), and Classroom Behavior ($B=1.112$, $\beta=.244$, $p<.01$) were the strongest predictors of Academic Performance. Teachers' Expectations had a weaker but still significant effect ($B=0.209$, $\beta=.039$, $p<.05$), while Classroom Collaboration was not significant. These findings align with the hyporesearch that confidence and participation are central drivers of academic success in gender-integrated settings.

CONCLUSIONS

- 1) The objectives of this study were threefold: first, to examine the impact of gender integration on the academic performance of primary model school students; second, to identify the perceived barriers to creating effective academic environments in primary model schools; and third, to suggest measures for uplifting the quality and equity of these schools. These objectives guided the exploration of how gender-inclusive practices, classroom climate, and teacher attitudes shape the learning outcomes of boys and girls.
- 2) To test these objectives, the study was anchored on three hypotheses. The first posited that gender-integrated classrooms in primary model schools would lead to significantly higher academic performance in both boys and girls compared to gender-segregated classrooms. The second suggested that the performance gap between boys and girls in subjects such as mathematics and reading would decrease over time in integrated classrooms. The third hypothesized that teacher attitudes toward gender roles would moderate the relationship between gender integration and academic performance.
- 3) The findings of the study provide strong support for these hypotheses. Results demonstrated that students in gender-integrated classrooms displayed greater confidence, participation, and collaboration, all of which positively influenced their academic achievement. Moreover, gender differences in performance were reduced, especially in subjects traditionally marked by stereotypes, supporting the second hyporesearch. Importantly, teacher perceptions and attitudes toward gender equity were found to significantly shape outcomes, confirming the moderating role suggested in the third hyporesearch.

- 4) In conclusion, the study affirms that gender integration, when supported by inclusive pedagogy, unbiased curricula, and equitable classroom practices, contributes to narrowing achievement gaps and fostering holistic academic growth for all students. However, it also highlights persistent challenges such as cultural norms, teacher biases, and infrastructural disparities, particularly in rural contexts, which must be addressed to realize the full potential of gender integration. The research not only fulfills its objectives but also provides valuable recommendations for educators and policymakers to promote equity and excellence in primary model education.

DISCUSSION

In the current research, the research question was the effects of gender integration on the academic performance of primary model schools based on the key factors of classroom participation, confidence, collaboration, teacher expectations, and behavior. The results indicate strong trends among demographic factors (gender, locality, marital status) and uphold the hyporesearch that the gender integration promotes better academic performance in case it is facilitated by inclusive practices.

Table 2 and Table 3 illustrated the existence of strong correlations between classroom participation, collaboration and teachers expectations and total academic performance. This conforms to the social learning theory by Bandura (1977) which argues that learning is done through observation and through interaction in socially inclusive environments. The results also corroborate Black and Wiliam (1998), who emphasized that formative assessments and active classroom participation significantly improve student achievement. The positive reliability scores ($\alpha > 0.70$) indicate that these construct was measured consistently, reinforcing their significance. Regression analysis (Table 4) showed that students' confidence ($\beta = .534, p < .01$) and classroom participation ($\beta = .451, p < .01$) were the strongest predictors of academic performance. This finding is consistent with Fabes, Martin, and Hanish (2018), who noted that gender-integrated classrooms foster self-efficacy and reduce performance disparities. Martin et al. (2022) further support this by showing that students with cross-gender peer networks report higher belongingness, which is a precursor to confidence and collaborative learning.

Table 5 revealed significant gender differences: female students scored higher in confidence, collaboration, teacher expectations, and overall academic performance compared to males. These results echo OECD (2016) and UNESCO (2003), which reported that while boys often lag in literacy, girls outperform in holistic academic measures when integration is implemented equitably. Xiao et al. (2023) provide further evidence that gender integration reduces disparities in both mathematics and reading, suggesting that integrated classrooms disrupt traditional stereotypes. Table 6 showed minimal differences between rural and urban students, with the exception of classroom behaviour, where urban students performed significantly better ($t = 2.53, p < .05$). This suggests that contextual factors such as resources and exposure to gender-equity discourses (Ifegbesan, 2010; Gorgadze, 2015) play a role in shaping integration outcomes. These findings imply that while integration benefits are widespread, infrastructural and cultural barriers may limit their effectiveness in rural settings. Marital differences by gender (Table 7) indicated that unmarried teachers had a slightly lesser score on classroom participation but no significant large disparities in academic achievement than married teachers. This is echoed in Farago et al. (2022) whose emphasis was that the gender-role attitudes of teachers and not demographic issues have a significant impact on equity in integrated classrooms.

These relationships between gender integration practices and the indicators of academic performance are very strong, which demonstrates that in favorable environments, integration is effective. Nevertheless, the identified gender discrepancies imply the continuance of stereotypes that must be addressed with the help of gender-responsive pedagogy (Safa, 2012; Abd Malik et al., 2023). Moreover, rural-urban differences support the use of the local approach to strategies and teacher training, which is the priority of UNESCO (2020) and Rarieya et al. (2024).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) To achieve the first objective—examining the impact of gender integration on academic performance—schools should adopt structured integration strategies that extend beyond merely seating boys and girls together. This means implementing inclusive pedagogical practices, such as cooperative learning activities and fair assessment methods that encourage equal participation. These approaches will enhance students' confidence, collaboration, and overall performance, thus supporting the hyporesearch that gender-integrated classrooms foster higher academic achievement.
- 2) Addressing the second objective—identifying barriers to effective academic environments—requires targeted teacher training and professional development. Since teacher attitudes and expectations strongly influence classroom equity, schools should invest in continuous training that equips educators with gender-responsive pedagogical skills. Such programs would reduce unconscious bias, ensure equitable participation across genders, and sustain positive classroom climates. This aligns with the hyporesearch that teacher attitudes toward gender roles moderate the effect of integration on student performance.
- 3) In response to the third objective—suggesting measures for uplifting primary model schools—policy makers and administrators should focus on revising curricula to remove gender bias and include diverse, balanced representations. Beyond curriculum, schools must engage parents and local communities to address cultural barriers to equity. Special attention should be directed toward rural and under-resourced schools, where disparities in infrastructure and exposure to gender-equity discourses persist. These measures would help reduce achievement gaps in subjects like mathematics and reading, thereby confirming the hyporesearch that integration narrows performance disparities in core academic areas.
- 4) The study suggests that as a solution to the first hyporesearch which says gender integration enhances academic performance, schools need to go beyond simply sitting boys and girls together and initiate an inclusive pedagogical process like cooperative learning, non-biased assessment and classroom confidence building. These will create an equal opportunity in participation, increase teamwork, and improve overall performance. According to the second hyporesearch -that teacher attitudes mediate the effects of integration, teacher professional development programs and ongoing professional development should be directed at teaching the teacher gender-sensitive abilities, reducing stereotypes, and providing fair expectations to both boys and girls.

In the third hyporesearch, the speculative hyporesearch, which states that gender inequality is minimized in educational disciplines such as mathematics and reading when curricular changes are made, students will need curriculum reforms that are expected to remove biases, balance between the genders, and provide school environments that are conducive and inclusive of parents and communities. Lastly, due to the differences evident in the rural and urban settings, the policies should focus on resource distribution and strategies tailored to the

local environment to make sure that schools in the rural setting are empowered to introduce the integration successfully as well.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on your research objectives and hypotheses, the following suggestions are aligned with them: To strengthen the impact of gender integration on academic performance, schools should adopt comprehensive and inclusive teaching strategies such as cooperative learning, equitable participation practices, and unbiased assessments, ensuring both boys and girls build confidence and collaboration skills, consistent with the hyporesearch that integration fosters higher achievement. To address barriers to effective academic environments, teachers should undergo continuous gender-responsive training to minimize unconscious biases, while curricular and instructional reforms should remove stereotypes and promote equal representation. This supports the hyporesearch that teacher attitudes moderate the effect of integration. Finally, for uplifting primary model schools, policymakers must prioritize equitable resource allocation, especially for rural schools, and engage communities and parents in promoting gender equality, ensuring that integration not only reduces subject-specific disparities but also creates supportive learning climates, fulfilling the hyporesearch that gender integration narrows gaps in reading, mathematics, and overall achievement.

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