

## Local Culture and Gender Differences in Educational Participation: A Study in Kwala Besar Village, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra, Indonesia

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### Abstract

Local culture has an impact on gender participation in education. This research examines how local cultural values affect gender gaps in education participation in Kwala Besar Village, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra. Information was gathered through observations and interviews with different informants (parents, students, teachers and community members). The results show a strong gender gap in attendance at school, with more girls than boys going to school at each level. This disparity reflects community values whereby local boys are encouraged to drop out of school early compared to girls encouraged to attend higher education. It is an unequal system that does not allow for balanced social development; boys are not participating effectively in future economic opportunities as a result of a lack of education, and girls are not placed in significant roles that allow them to contribute to the development of the community. The study demonstrates the strong impact of local cultural values upon the opportunities available to the younger generation, and will be of interest to researchers, policymakers, educators, and development practitioners looking to plan culturally sensitive interventions to advance gender equity in education and community development.

Budaya lokal mempengaruhi partisipasi gender dalam pendidikan. Studi ini menelusuri dampak nilai-nilai budaya lokal terhadap perbedaan gender dalam partisipasi pendidikan di Desa Kwala Besar, Kabupaten Langkat, Sumatera Utara. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi dan wawancara dengan informan beragam, termasuk orang tua, siswa, guru, dan anggota masyarakat. Temuan studi mengungkap adanya perbedaan gender signifikan dalam kehadiran sekolah, dengan lebih banyak perempuan daripada laki-laki terdaftar pada setiap tingkat. Ketidakseimbangan didasarkan pada nilai-nilai setempat, di mana anak laki-laki acap terpaksa meninggalkan sekolah lebih awal untuk mencari ikan di danau setempat demi berkontribusi pada ekonomi keluarga, sedangkan anak perempuan didorong mengejar pendidikan lebih tinggi. Ketidakseimbangan tersebut menyebabkan hambatan pada perkembangan sosial yang seimbang, sebab anak laki-laki dikecualikan dari peluang ekonomi jangka panjang akibat terbatasnya pendidikan, sementara anak perempuan kerap tidak ditempatkan dalam peran strategis yang memungkinkan kontribusi sepenuhnya pada pembangunan masyarakat. Studi ini menyoroti kuatnya pengaruh nilai-nilai budaya lokal dalam membentuk peluang yang tersedia bagi generasi muda serta memberikan wawasan berharga bagi perumus kebijakan, pendidik, dan praktisi pembangunan yang berupaya merancang intervensi sensitif budaya guna mempromosikan kesetaraan gender dalam pendidikan dan pengembangan masyarakat.

**Keywords:** coastal communities; educational participation; local culture

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## Introduction

Local culture refers to the unique habits, beliefs, values, and social norms that influence how communities perceive roles, such as gender and education (Irawan et al. 2024). It can significantly influence educational participation by reinforcing or challenging gender role expectations. For example, in some rural areas, cultural norms may give more importance to boys' education and expect girls to focus on domestic duties, which results in unequal educational access (Rusdiansyah et al. 2025). Gender differences in educational participation, which are shaped by local culture and its values and norms, are deeply rooted in the historical and social systems.

Previous research has shown the pervasiveness of such influence, especially in Africa and Southeast Asia, where patriarchal norms affect girls' and boys' access to and success in education (Diyono et al. 2024; Khoza, Van Niekerk, and Nemaconde 2019). A study in Poland has also demonstrated how historical contexts continue to shape present-day educational expectations, revealing the enduring impact of cultural values on educational inequality and gender parity (Herbst 2021). Similarly, women's leadership in school management in Ghana occurs within deeply rooted patriarchal structures that shape societal expectations of women. Female principals are often expected to navigate these constraints by drawing on cultural values such as collectivism and interrelatedness to assert their authority (Brion and Ampah-Mensah 2021). These findings underscore the importance of contextual sensitivity when examining gender dynamics in education, and they highlight the resilience of women who pursue leadership roles in institutions historically dominated by men. However, further research into these

dynamics is needed to deepen understanding of how cultural norms shape educational practices across countries.

Broadening the regional scope, recent studies on Indonesia and Nepal demonstrate how local cultural norms are pivotal in shaping educational outcomes. In Indonesia, research shows that character education programs rooted in local wisdom have successfully fostered positive social behavior and heightened environmental awareness among students. Such culturally grounded approaches to education are instrumental in supporting adolescents' identity development and sense of responsibility (Aura, Supiandi, and Nugraha 2023). Similarly, in Nepal, institutionalized patriarchy, reflected in norms such as early age at marriage, has been shown to hinder girls' education by promoting early marriage, which disrupts formal schooling and deepens existing gender disparities (Jafarey, Mainali, and Montes-Rojas 2020). These examples provide compelling evidence that local perceptions of social norms, whether supportive or restrictive of educational access, shape gender dynamics beyond Asia and Africa.

Studies on gender differences in education are largely framed through a social constructivist lens, which views gender not as a purely biological trait but as a socially constructed identity shaped by societal norms and stereotypes (Helgetun 2023). These social constructions reinforce distinct expectations for boys' and girls' behavior within schools, resulting in differences in conduct and opportunities. Research shows that educational environments often mirror gender stereotypes, portraying boys as more competent and capable, which can discourage girls from pursuing ambitious academic or career paths (Aragonés-González, Rosser-Limiñana, and Gil-González 2020; Düzgün et al. 2021).

In Indonesia, studies found that multiple factors, including socio-economic conditions, cultural norms, familial practices, and government regulations, shape educational participation. Economic challenges, particularly poverty, play a crucial role, as families facing financial hardship often prioritize immediate income over schooling. It is especially true for girls in settings where cultural norms are deeply rooted in male preference (Kricorian et al. 2020). In addition, education participation is significantly influenced by local culture and tradition; traditional beliefs could limit girls' opportunities to pursue education, often viewing schooling for girls as less important than fulfilling domestic responsibilities (Pratiwi 2024).

The current paper contributes to the literature in this field by investigating the role of local culture in shaping educational gender disparities in the particular socio-cultural setting of Kwala Besar Village, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra, which has not been well-represented in the literature. While current literature covers gender and education broadly, it pays little attention to how deeply rooted local beliefs and norms differently affect gendered educational opportunities in rural Indonesia.

Kwala Besar Village (Langkat Regency, North Sumatra) was selected for this study due to its unique gendered learning practices and rich

cultural history, which reflect broader rural Indonesian socio-cultural dynamics. The community is distinctive because customary beliefs both support and hinder educational access based on gender. This complex view of girls' education and boys' roles makes the village an ideal setting to explore how gender influences educational participation locally.

This qualitative descriptive research aims to deeply understand cultural, social, and economic factors influencing education, particularly concerning gender norms and appearance. Data were gathered from community members who both participate in and are affected by local educational practices, providing a comprehensive view of the issue. A purposive method was used to select informants of diverse backgrounds, including parents, students, teachers, and officers from the local education authority, as summarized in Table 1.

Data was collected through participant observations and semi-structured interviews. Attention was paid to the practical context of education and gender relations observed in real life at home and school. Semi-structured interviews facilitated more in-depth views of community beliefs, values, and contextual factors that influence beliefs and values about gender and education.

Table 1  
List of Informants

Informant	Number
Parents	2
Teachers	2
Students	2
Local education authority officers	2

Source: Primary Data

The study employed Miles and Huberman's interactive model for data analysis, which consists of three stages: data condensation, data display, and the drawing/verification of conclusions. This method enables the identification of patterns and formulating general observations about how local culture influences gender roles and educational participation (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014).

This research explores three main issues: 1) educational participation and gender disparities in Kwala Besar Village, 2) the cultural and traditional foundations of these disparities, and 3) their impact on the community. The study is guided by the assumption that low educational participation is not solely due to economic or infrastructural limitations but is deeply rooted in local values and socio-cultural norms. These cultural norms tend to privilege one gender over the other, whether girls or boys, depending on the local context, limiting their participation in education. This selective support can reinforce disparities and contribute to broader social injustices, including gender bias, unequal community development, and long-term economic inequality.

### **Gender-based Educational Participation in Kwala Besar Village**

Kwala Besar is located in the Langkat, North Sumatra, Indonesia sub-district, about five miles north of the town of Lhokseumawe, on the Malacca Straits, which opens directly into the ocean. The village is home to around 600 families and approximately 1,500 residents, making it one of the most densely populated villages in the area. However, despite its large population, educational opportunities in the village remain limited. Only primary and secondary schools are available; students wishing to continue to senior high school must

leave the village. Many students must leave their families and the village to pursue senior high school. Some enroll in Islamic boarding schools outside the region, while others move to cities where such schools are available.

Regarding livelihood, most residents in Kwala Besar Village rely heavily on marine resources as their primary source of income. Located along the coast of the Malacca Strait, most villagers work as fishers. This dependence on the sea is economic and deeply tied to their identity and way of life. However, limited access to land restricts opportunities for alternative livelihoods. With much of the area bounded by the sea, land transportation is minimal or sometimes absent compared to sea routes. As a result, villagers have limited access to broader markets or services. While some engage in small-scale local trade to supplement their income, most depend on fishing as their main livelihood.

Villagers in Kwala Besar do have the option of seeking livelihoods elsewhere by boat. While maritime transport offers access to local markets and trade centers, its limited capacity and range hinder the development of alternative employment beyond fishing. Such economic hardship places most residents in the middle to lower income bracket, with many households struggling to meet daily needs and relying on government support. This economic vulnerability also affects education; many families generally do not prioritize higher education.

In Kwala Besar Village, it is rare for boys to pursue higher education, such as Senior High School (SMA). Many are compelled to work, often as fishermen, to support their families due to financial hardship. Fishing remains a key source of family income, making boys' labor essential.

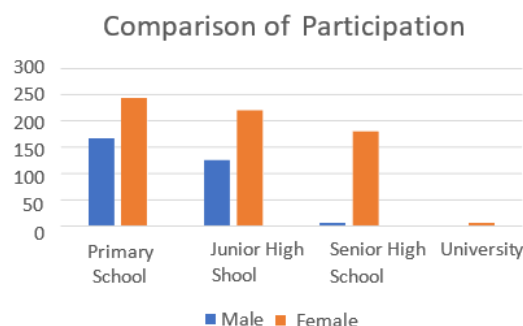
By contrast, opportunities for girls to access higher education have increased in recent years, particularly at the senior high school level. In an interview, a junior high school teacher (NR) shared that parents are becoming more aware of the positive impact of girls' education on a family's social and economic status. Another teacher (IG) and two local education officials noted that many parents now see education as a way for their daughters to achieve future success and help lift their families out of poverty. This shift in mindset has led some families to prioritize girls' education, even when financial resources are limited.

This finding indicates a notable change in parental attitudes toward female education. The increasing willingness to support daughters' schooling reflects a growing recognition of its long-term value for the individual and the household's socio-economic advancement. From an analytical perspective, such changes suggest progress in overcoming traditional gender norms that have historically limited girls' access to education. It also highlights the potential for education to serve as a tool for social mobility within marginalized rural communities.

In Kwala Besar Village, it has become a cultural norm that boys are expected to forgo higher education and instead start working as fishermen. In comparison, girls are given more opportunities to pursue higher education. Economic constraints reinforce this practice, making it a deeply ingrained part of the community's way of life. For generations, boys have been taught that working as a fisherman is the "best" and most practical path for supporting their families and the village. Attending university is often seen as unrealistic or a waste of time and money. In contrast, girls are viewed as having the potential to bring positive change to their lives and families, motivating them to seek higher education.

Figure 1 shows male and female participation across different education levels in Kwala Besar Village, including schools and universities both inside and outside the village. There is a clear gender difference in educational participation. At the primary level, there were 165 boys and 243 girls, indicating that more girls attended primary school. In junior high school, girls continue to outnumber boys, with 220 girls compared to 124 boys.

Figure 1  
2024 Participation Rates



Source: Local Education Authority Officers, Year 2024

This pattern suggests that female participation remains relatively high even as students progress to higher levels of higher level of education in Kwala Besar Village.

At the senior high school level, the gender gap is even more pronounced, with only five boys from Kwala Besar Village continuing beyond this level compared to 180 girls. It highlights significantly lower male participation in education at this stage. There are no male participants at the university level, while five females are either currently enrolled or have already graduated.

Participation numbers for Kindergarten, Primary School, and Junior High School in Kwala Besar Village, Langkat, in 2024 are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 describes the male-female student population in three levels of schools located in Kwala Besar Village, which shows disparities in the schooling participation of the two groups.

At the kindergarten level, 6 boys and 9 girls were enrolled, suggesting higher early participation among girls. By third grade, 17 boys and 23 girls had enrolled. At the senior high school level, 16 boys and 24 girls were participating, demonstrating a consistent trend of greater female involvement across educational stages.

However, qualitative data reveals challenges in maintaining school attendance, especially among boys. In an interview, a male junior high school student (SMA) shared that he does not plan to continue to senior high school, as he intends to become a fisherman to support his parents, who rely on daily coastal fishing income.

This reflects the social and cultural pressures influencing educational decisions in rural areas. Boys from low-income families are often expected to contribute economically at an early age, reinforcing the norm of males as providers. In contrast, girls are increasingly encouraged to pursue education as a means to improve their families' long-term prospects.

This trend reveals two competing narratives: the increasing access to education for girls signals progress toward gender parity, while the high dropout rates among boys, driven by economic hardship, expose deeper structural vulnerabilities. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that supports both boys and girls in completing their education and provides economic safety nets for families, particularly in coastal and low-income communities.

Table 2  
Number of Students in Kwala Besar Village in 2024

Education Level	Number of Participations	
	Male	Female
Kindergarten	6	9
Primary School	17	23
Junior High School	16	24

Source: Head of Kwala Besar Village, Secanggang, Year 2024

SH, a mother from Kwala Besar Village, shared that her son began fishing at a young age because his father needed him to help support the family. It reflects a common trade-off in low-income settings, where families must choose between a child's immediate contribution to household income and their continued education, especially for boys.

SH's account illustrates how economic pressures often outweigh educational goals, particularly when family-run, informal labor is involved. In rural communities, boys are typically expected to work as soon as they can, often leading to early school dropout. In contrast, girls, viewed as long-term investments, are increasingly encouraged to stay in school.

This situation demonstrates a structural link between parental socio-economic status (SES) and educational opportunity. Low-income families are more likely to pull their sons from school early to meet immediate financial needs, perpetuating cycles of poverty and limited social mobility. These findings align with prior research on the negative correlation between household poverty and school retention. Addressing this issue requires integrating rural education policy in Indonesia with economic support programs that reduce financial strain and allow families to prioritize education and survival (Aishi et al. 2020).

In addition, Aishi et al. (2020) found an inverse relationship between education levels and occupational attitudes in fishing communities. As children become more involved in traditional family work like fishing, aspirations for higher education tend to decline. Similar findings in other studies highlight how limited resources often compel parents to prioritize short-term labor needs over long-term educational investment, reinforcing cycles of poverty and undereducation in rural areas.

## **Local Values Shaping Gender Differences in Educational Participation**

Local values rooted in the culture of Kwala Besar Village, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra, play a key role in shaping gender inequalities in educational participation. Although both boys and girls have equal access to formal education at the primary level, their education paths diverge thereafter, greatly influenced by traditional roles and economic factors. It is also consistent with the social construction theory, which argues that gender roles and behaviors are not biologically fixed but are shaped and reinforced over time by societal norms (Setinawati et al. 2025).

Gender differences in educational participation in Kwala Besar Village, Langkat Regency, are strongly shaped by local values and cultural expectations. While boys and girls initially have similar access to early education, their paths begin to diverge with age due to socio-economic pressures and deeply rooted traditional beliefs. This divergence is not based on academic ability, but on social and cultural norms that define gender roles in the community (Chaffee and Plante 2022; Nur and Barigayomwe 2024).

The village's economy, which relies heavily on fishing, strongly influences local gender roles. Boys are socialized from a young age to become income earners, often through fishing or related work, and are expected to leave school early to fulfill these roles. It reflects a prevailing narrative that positions boys as primary providers, where their immediate economic contribution is seen as more valuable than the long-term benefits of education (Ahmad, Shaheen, and Hussain 2024; Dikshit 2022). The notion that boys should engage in physically

demanding labor is prevalent across cultures, and such social attitudes play a significant role in shaping educational outcomes (Chaffee and Plante 2022; Dicke, Safavian, and Eccles 2019).

Conversely, there is a noticeable shift in attitudes toward girls' education, as families increasingly perceive it as a long-term investment. Educated daughters are now viewed as future assets who can enhance family well-being by contributing economically to the household (Ayon 2023; Shang 2024). This emerging perspective aligns with broader societal trends that recognize women's education as a catalyst for both their personal development and the advancement of their communities (Alnaa and Matey 2023) (Muhammad and Sharif 2018). Although girls often face less immediate economic pressure to work, traditional social expectations still create barriers that can limit their academic achievement (Ahmad et al. 2024; Dicke et al. 2019). Family economic pressures often force difficult decisions about which child to support in school. In many communities, including this one, boys are more likely to leave school to work, while girls are encouraged to continue schooling with the hope that their success will benefit the family (Ayon 2023; Nur and Barigayomwe 2024; Yigit-Gencten et al. 2024). The interplay of cultural norms and economic pressures reinforces the preference for boys, perpetuating a cycle of gender inequality in educational opportunities and revealing the complex, multi-layered nature of these challenges (Chaffee and Plante 2022) (Taqaddausi, Akbary, and Behzad 2023).

While the importance of girls' education is gradually being recognized in Kwala Besar Village, gender-based barriers still shape how boys and girls access education and the careers they aspire to. In an interview, a father—

referred to as BS—expressed support for his daughter's schooling but noted that social norms limit how far girls can pursue education. He explained that even academically successful girls are "expected to be home after school cooking and looking after siblings." In his community, girls who study too much may be seen as neglecting their traditional roles, which affects families' willingness to invest in their further education.

This testimony reflects a dual reality. On one hand, there is clear progress in family attitudes toward girls' education, with more families recognizing its importance. On the other hand, deeply rooted cultural norms still strongly influence educational pathways, especially beyond primary school. Girls may be enrolled, but their schooling is often interrupted or they are withdrawn due to household responsibilities or pressure to conform to traditional gender roles.

Boys face a different kind of pressure. They are often socialized to start working at a young age, which creates a direct conflict between school attendance and economic contribution to the household. For many boys, this leads to early dropout or irregular attendance, as the role of "provider" takes priority over being a "student."

Analytically, the significance of these findings lies in how peer-enforced gender norms form part of a systemic structure that denies educational equity. While the nature of these constraints differs—economic responsibilities primarily affecting boys, and domestic and cultural expectations shaping girls' experiences—the result is the same: lower educational attainment and unequal opportunities. Addressing these issues requires looking beyond enrollment figures to tackle the deeper social structures and beliefs that shape



how children are viewed within their families and communities (Alnaa and Matey 2023; Gromkowska-Melosik and Boron 2023; Muhammad and Sharif 2018).

To change this gender dimension of inequality, a cultural shift towards the redefinition of gender roles will be required in addition to transformations of the economic institutions that sustain them (Ahmad et al. 2024; Alnaa and Matey 2023). Developing a holistic perception of the value of education, regardless of biological sex, could lead to more equal access. Dismantling these deeply embedded norms will require conscious efforts from both the community and education authorities to reshape expectations and create an environment where all children can pursue their educational goals free from stereotypical gender constraints (Alnaa and Matey 2023).

### **The Impact of Gender Inequality in Educational Participation on Community Development**

Gender imbalance in educational participation in Kwala Besar Village has significant long-term implications for community development. In an interview, a parent from the village (SH) shared that girls are now more encouraged to stay in school, while there is less urgency to support boys' continued education. SH emphasized that in many households, especially those with fewer resources, boys are expected to leave school early to take on work responsibilities. Meanwhile, investing in daughters is increasingly seen as an investment in the family's long-term well-being, with girls viewed as having the potential to secure stable future employment through education.

This story reflects a broader trend where girls' education is framed as a long-term family

investment, whereas boys are expected to fill immediate economic roles. However, SH also noted that even with family support, social norms still restrict the types of education considered appropriate for girls, often aligning with traditional expectations.

Cultural forces that define who have access to quality education and for what purpose shouldn't just be a matter of opportunity for individuals, a father in Kwala Besar Village (BS) said, "but for community advancement and the growth of the economy as a whole and the welfare of us all." When boys leave school early and conservative ideals limit girls' education, the community remains trapped in outdated gender roles, hindering true progress toward equality.

From an analytical perspective, this situation reveals a deeply rooted structural inequality that perpetuates a cycle of dependence and stalled development. While some shifts in attitudes are emerging, they are not yet transformative enough to disrupt the broader gender order. Meaningful progress requires a concerted effort to challenge entrenched gender norms and implement gender-sensitive educational policies that ensure all children, regardless of sex, can attend school and fully engage in community life (Badriah and Istiqomah 2022).

Early educational opportunities may appear equitable at first, but as children grow, cultural norms increasingly divide the educational paths of boys and girls. This imbalance represents not only a loss in individual potential but also a missed opportunity for broader economic growth. Research indicates that such gender disparities in education directly hinder potential income gains and community development. For instance, Badriah and Istiqomah's study (2022) links gendered educational gaps to stagnant

income growth, showing that communities with higher female educational participation tend to experience greater male-female income convergence and, consequently, enhanced economic stability.

In addition, hegemonic male gendered expectations tied to the village's fishing-based economy reinforce gender bias and contribute to the early dropout of male students. This pragmatic expectation depletes the community's human capital, as boys who leave school prematurely are denied access to further education and skill development. Research also shows a direct relationship between education level and economic participation, highlighting that limited educational opportunities for any gender lead to inefficiencies in the labor market and losses in economic productivity (Angeles et al. 2021).

The education gap frames girls as increasingly valuable long-term investments, while boys continued under-education poses significant long-term economic risks. This imbalance fosters a dependency cycle where only some children are adequately prepared to contribute to the economy, likely limiting innovation and narrowing the diversity of skills in the labor market. This situation is worsened by evidence suggesting that the under employment of male labor in certain contexts has contributed to slow economic recovery and growth (Atiq and Qadri 2021). From the perspective of Gender and Development (GAD) Theory, the gendered nature of education must be addressed to empower individuals and promote sustainable development within the community (Yue 2024).

Moreover, as schools increasingly invest in girls' education, this progress can paradoxically reinforce existing inequalities. While families may support their daughters academically,

entrenched beliefs about masculinity can restrict broader educational growth. These contradictions hinder educational equity and community development, entrenching gender divisions that weaken social cohesion and limit shared economic progress (Badriah and Istiqomah 2022).

From an economic perspective, advancing gender equality in education increases individual income and contributes to broader community wealth and stability. Research shows that gender-inclusive education policies foster innovation and enhance productivity by enabling participation across all segments of the population. Consequently, local development strategies must adopt a gender-sensitive approach to education and community engagement, promoting long-term improvements in the socio-economic status of communities (Tokal et al. 2023).

The root causes of gender disparities in educational enrollment must be addressed. Comprehensive policies that balance traditional norms with the modern demands of the economy can enable both boys and girls to thrive. Programs that offer incentives for families to educate all their children, regardless of gender, can serve as catalysts for community development and break the cycles that inhibit long-term progress (Angeles et al. 2021). Achieving gender parity in economic initiatives is essential to break the cycle of poverty in the community and improve living standards, as new educational paradigms are increasingly linked to sustainable development (Atiq and Qadri 2021).

In conclusion, without a shift in societal attitudes toward the role of females in education, the full benefits of integrated policy frameworks will remain out of reach. Aligning cultural values with contemporary economic

realities and ensuring equal educational opportunities for all children are essential steps toward holistic community development. In agrarian-based economies like that of Kwala Besar, intentional policy reform is crucial to dismantle existing barriers and fully unlock the community's human capital potential.

## Conclusion

What is particularly intriguing about this study is its unexpected finding that, in Kwala Besar Village, gender-biased traditional norms and values appear to favor girls' advancement in education, especially at the senior high school level, over that of boys. While much of the existing literature on gender and education highlights male privilege in access to schooling, this local context presents a reverse trend. Here, girls are viewed as future "bearers of family honor" and "economic hope," identities that are increasingly tied to their educational success. Interviews with local teachers and community members indicate that families often encourage daughters to continue their studies even amid financial hardship. In contrast, boys are frequently urged to enter the workforce early, based on the prevailing cultural expectation that they serve as primary earners. This atypical pattern, where girls outperform boys in educational participation, has been seldom reported and offers a valuable counter-narrative to dominant gender-education discourses.

The value of the present study lies in its culturally embedded account of educational participation, offering a new lens through which to examine gender order in rural, coastal areas. While many national-level statistics often overlook these subtleties, this study provides more granular insight into how local norms shape girls' educational decision-making. It contributes to the broader scholarly

conversation by challenging the stereotype that boys are the default beneficiaries of education and by showing how socio-cultural shifts can enable greater educational attainment for girls. This positions the study within the emerging literature on culturally embedded gender dynamics and educational equity in Southeast Asia and other regions of the Global South.

However, the study is not without limitations. It draws from a single village case study and employs a qualitative methodology, which may be critiqued for limited generalizability. The findings, largely derived from interviews and observations, may not fully account for other structural or economic determinants influencing educational decisions. Future research could expand this inquiry by including additional rural and coastal communities and adopting mixed-method or comparative approaches across different regions. Further studies might also explore how these dynamics evolve over time, particularly as modernization and external interventions reach more traditional settings.[]

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