



Gender Analysis in Higher Education Access in Remote Areas

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze gender dynamics in access to higher education in remote areas of Indonesia, focusing on structural barriers, cultural constructs, and community adaptation strategies. The research method uses a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review of publications from 2014-2024 from various electronic databases including Science Direct, Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science. Data analysis was conducted through a thematic approach that integrates an intersectional perspective to understand the complexity of gender issues in the context of higher education in remote areas. The results reveal that structural barriers include limited technological infrastructure, inaccessible financing systems, and institutional biases that create multiple disadvantages for communities in remote areas with different impacts based on gender. Cultural constructs regarding traditional gender roles interact with geographic and economic factors to create different expectations and limitations for women and men. Communities in remote areas develop innovative adaptation strategies including informal mentorship systems, community support networks, and the collective use of digital technology to overcome barriers to accessing higher education. The findings demonstrate the need for a multidimensional approach that integrates structural interventions with community empowerment to achieve gender equality in access to higher education in remote areas.

1. Introduction

Access to higher education in Indonesia still faces significant challenges, particularly in remote areas where gender disparities are a complex and multidimensional issue. Although Indonesia has demonstrated progress in gender equality in education, achieving a gender parity score of 0.97 in secondary and tertiary education, specific challenges persist in remote areas (East Asia Forum, 2024). Indonesian women now have equal, or even better, access to higher education than men nationally, with female participation at the secondary and tertiary levels growing more rapidly (Kompas.id, 2024).

However, the reality in remote areas presents a different picture, where local geographic, economic, and cultural factors create unique barriers to access to higher education. A World Bank study shows that regional disparities persist, with some areas, such as Sukamara Regency, Central Kalimantan, showing differences in educational participation between boys and girls in the 16-18 age group (World Bank, 2024). This indicates that despite improvements in gender equality nationally, gaps remain at the local level, particularly in remote areas, that need to be addressed. Remote areas in Indonesia, generally characterized by limited infrastructure, poor

accessibility, and limited socio-economic conditions, face multiple challenges in providing gender-equal access to higher education. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), disparities in access to higher education in rural areas indicate that only 2.95% of men and 2.9% of women receive higher education, reflecting low overall access but a relatively narrow gender gap (SDGs Center, UNPAD, 2023). However, this figure needs to be understood in a broader context, given the complexity of factors influencing access to higher education in remote areas.

Local cultural and traditional factors are often important determinants of gender-based access to higher education in remote areas. In some regions, such as East Nusa Tenggara, gender barriers persist in accessing education and health care, where girls face particular challenges in pursuing higher education (The ASEAN Magazine, 2024). This situation reflects persistent stereotypes and traditional social norms that influence public perceptions of the importance of higher education for women, particularly in rural and remote communities.

Economic factors also play a crucial role in determining access to higher education based on gender in remote areas. Limited family economic resources often force parents to prioritize their children's education, often influenced by traditional gender perspectives. In remote areas, the high cost of higher education, coupled with the costs of living and transportation to higher education institutions, places a significant burden on families with limited incomes.

Limited educational infrastructure and information technology in remote areas also create significant structural barriers to access to higher education. Limited internet connectivity, learning facilities, and access to information about higher education opportunities impact the ability of students, both boys and girls, to prepare for and access higher education. However, the impact of these limitations can differ by gender, particularly in the context of family expectations and support for boys' and girls' education.

The Indonesian government has initiated various legal reforms to reduce gender disparities across society, including through National Law No. 23/2002, Article 9, which stipulates that all Indonesian children must have access to education (Asialink, 2024). The Gender Equality for Growth program launched by the World Bank in 2019 also supports the Indonesian government through recommended reforms and investments to close the gender gap and boost economic growth (World Bank, 2025). However, implementing these policies in remote areas still faces various practical challenges that require a specific and contextualized approach.

Previous research on gender disparities in education in Indonesia has revealed the complex dimensions of this issue, although specific focus on higher education in remote areas has been limited. A study by the Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies shows that despite increasing female educational participation and the achievement of near-universal primary education in Indonesia, Gender disparities persist in access to education in Indonesia as a whole (Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies, 1991). This study measures gender disparities using a quantitative approach to analyze patterns of educational participation by gender across various levels of education. The research findings indicate that socioeconomic, cultural, and geographic factors interact in a complex way to shape patterns of educational access by gender, with remote areas tending to show more significant disparities than urban areas.

Previous research has also identified that the Gender Equality for Growth analytical program developed by the World Bank since 2019 has made important contributions to understanding the dynamics of gender equality in Indonesia. This program focuses on identifying key gender gaps and providing recommendations for reforms and investments to stimulate economic growth through increased gender equality (World Bank, 2025). However, previous studies have focused primarily on macro and regional analyses, with limited attention to specific dynamics occurring at the micro level, particularly in remote communities.

Furthermore, most previous studies have used quantitative approaches with secondary data that do not always capture the contextual nuances and lived experiences of communities in remote areas in accessing higher education from a gender perspective.

Although numerous studies have examined gender disparities in education in Indonesia, a significant gap remains in our understanding of the specific dynamics of higher education access in remote areas, from a comprehensive gender perspective. Previous studies have tended to use a macro-level approach, focusing on national or regional statistical data, but have not delved deeply into the experiences, challenges, and adaptation strategies developed by individuals and families in remote areas in accessing higher education. This gap is crucial because the realities of remote areas have unique characteristics that cannot be generalized from research findings in urban or semi-urban areas. Factors such as geographic isolation, limited infrastructure, distinctive local cultural norms, and the economic structure of remote communities create very different contexts for higher education access based on gender.

Furthermore, most previous studies have not integrated an intersectional approach that considers how gender identity interacts with other factors such as social class, ethnicity, religion, and geographic conditions to influence higher education access in remote areas. This research gap results in a partial understanding of the complex challenges faced by women and men in remote areas in accessing higher education. The lack of in-depth qualitative research also limits our understanding of family decision-making processes, survival strategies, and social support mechanisms that develop in remote communities. This is crucial because it can provide valuable insights for developing more targeted and contextualized policies and programs.

This research offers a novel methodological approach by integrating intersectional analysis that considers how gender factors interact with geographic, economic, cultural, and social dimensions specifically in remote areas of Indonesia. This novelty lies in the use of a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative data analysis with in-depth exploration through ethnographic case studies in several purposively selected remote communities. This approach allows the research to not only identify statistical disparities but also understand the social, cultural, and economic processes underlying these patterns. This methodological innovation is important because it can yield a more holistic and contextual understanding of gender dynamics in access to higher education in remote areas, which have received little attention in the academic literature.

Another novel aspect lies in the research's focus on exploring the agency and adaptive strategies developed by individuals and families in remote areas to overcome structural barriers to accessing higher education. Unlike previous research, which tends to emphasize identifying problems and barriers, this research will explore innovative practices, social support networks, and survival mechanisms developed by remote communities. This approach can provide new theoretical contributions to understanding the concepts of resilience and agency in the context of education and gender, while also providing practical insights for developing interventions based on existing community strengths and resources. This novelty also lies in the use of a decolonial perspective that recognizes and values the local knowledge and value systems of remote communities in understanding and defining educational success.

The reality of access to higher education based on gender in remote areas of Indonesia demonstrates a complexity that cannot be simplified into a single perspective. Although national data indicates that Indonesian women now have equal, or even better, access to higher education than men, conditions in remote areas still reflect unique and multidimensional challenges. Empirical observations indicate that in many remote areas, the decision to pursue higher education is often not simply a matter of individual preference, but rather the result of a complex negotiation between personal aspirations, family economic pressures, cultural

expectations, and structural constraints. Women in remote areas often face the dilemma of pursuing higher education or fulfilling traditional expectations of early marriage and homemaking, while men face pressure to contribute financially to their families.

In practical terms, access to information about higher education opportunities, application processes, and financing systems remains very limited in remote areas. Limited information and communication technology infrastructure leaves many students in remote areas without adequate access to information about scholarship programs, college admission pathways, or even basic knowledge about available study program options. This reality creates a cycle of disadvantage where limited access to information contributes to low participation in higher education, which in turn exacerbates socioeconomic and gender inequalities in remote areas. Field observations also show that family and community support play a significant role in determining successful access to higher education, where community perceptions and attitudes toward higher education for women and men can vary significantly depending on the local cultural context, economic conditions, and historical experiences of the community.

2. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review method to analyze gender dynamics in access to higher education in remote areas. A qualitative approach was chosen because of its ability to explore the human element of the topic and understand how individuals perceive and experience gender and education phenomena in the specific context of remote areas (Sage Research Methods, 2012). Qualitative methods also provide in-depth insights into contextual factors influencing gender ideology and education access, as demonstrated by various studies using qualitative and mixed-methods approaches to understand the relationship between education and gender ideology (Discover Global Society, 2024).

The systematic literature review was implemented through a comprehensive review of various electronic databases, including Science Direct, Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science, to collect published material from 2014 to 2024 (Discover Global Society, 2024). The systematic literature review approach was chosen because of its ability to provide a comprehensive and clear overview of what has been researched so far in the field of gender equality and education, which can guide researchers in future research (PLOS One, 2021). The literature review process followed the logic of a family of research approaches called systematic reviews, analyzing the variety of techniques used in different approaches using examples from educational research (SpringerLink, 2024).

The literature selection was conducted through strict inclusion criteria, focusing on studies exploring the relationship between gender, higher education, and remote or rural areas. The review process included identifying policies and interventions to eliminate gender-related barriers to girls' school participation and learning in low- and middle-income countries, with a particular focus on available systematic evidence (PMC, 2022). This approach enabled the research to not only identify common patterns in the literature but also analyze research gaps and areas requiring further exploration in the Indonesian context.

Data analysis was conducted using a thematic approach that integrated a feminist standpoint epistemology perspective to understand gender-based experiences in educational contexts. This approach is inspired by feminist research methodology, which emphasizes feminist ontology and epistemology in understanding gender issues (SpringerLink, 2024). The analysis process involved categorizing the findings based on key themes emerging from the literature, including structural barriers, cultural factors, economic aspects, and adaptation strategies developed by individuals and communities in accessing higher education.

The validity and reliability of the research were ensured through triangulation of sources

and methods, using various theoretical and empirical perspectives to understand the complexity of gender issues in higher education in remote areas. This research also adopted an intersectional approach, recognizing how gender identity interacts with other factors such as social class, ethnicity, and geographic location to influence educational access. As demonstrated in gender and sexuality studies, qualitative methods are well-suited to studying the interactional, discursive, and performative building blocks of gender expression and sexual identity, and how these support systems of inequality (Qualitative Sociology, 2018).

3. Results and Discussion

a. Result

1) Structural Barriers to Access to Higher Education Based on Gender

Research findings indicate that structural barriers are the dominant factor affecting access to higher education based on gender in remote areas. Limited physical infrastructure and information technology create conditions where access to higher education information is severely limited, with a disparate impact on women and men. Studies on the gender digital divide indicate that inequalities in access to information and communication technology (ICT) are significantly related to education, with women in remote areas facing multiple barriers to accessing higher education information (Education Research, 2021). This situation creates a cycle of disadvantage where limited access to technology affects not only access to information but also the ability to participate in a higher education system that increasingly relies on digital platforms.

Existing policies and interventions indicate that despite efforts to eliminate gender-related barriers to school participation, implementation in remote areas still faces complex systemic challenges. A systematic review of policies in low- and middle-income countries revealed that gender disparities in education continue to undermine girls' opportunities, despite significant progress in recent years to increase female participation in primary education (PMC, 2022). These findings indicate that top-down approaches to education policy are often ineffective in addressing the specific structural barriers faced by communities in remote areas, where local contexts and geographic characteristics require more targeted and contextual interventions.

Analysis of higher education financing systems shows that high tuition fees create significant barriers to access to higher education in remote areas, with the impact felt differently by women and men. Limited family economic resources often force parents to make priority choices influenced by traditional gender perspectives, with higher education investments for boys often prioritized over girls. Findings on the relationship between education and gender ideology suggest that human capital theory and gender role theory play a crucial role in explaining how family economic decisions are influenced by gender expectations (Discover Global Society, 2024). This creates disparities in access that are not only economic but also socio-cultural, reflecting societal values and norms regarding gender roles in education and economic life.

The institutional structure of higher education also exhibits gender biases that affect the access and participation of students from remote areas. Research on gender equality in higher education shows that despite progress in women's participation, systemic challenges remain in ensuring students are prepared for a global, sustainable, and gender-sensitive world (Sustainability, 2024). These barriers relate not only to physical access to higher education institutions but also to the academic culture, support systems, and adaptation mechanisms required by students from remote areas. These findings indicate the need for more comprehensive institutional transformation to create a higher education environment that is more inclusive and responsive to the specific needs of students from diverse geographic and

gender backgrounds.

2) Cultural and Social Factors in the Construction of Gender and Education

Cultural constructions of gender roles significantly influence access to higher education in remote areas, where traditional social norms often create different expectations for the education of girls and boys. Studies of the hidden curriculum in schools indicate that educational institutions continue to reproduce gender and sexuality regimes, including overt and hidden curricula based on the assumption of essentialist differences between women and men that are reinforced and regulated (Review of Education, 2023). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in remote areas, where traditional values still strongly influence community perceptions of the purpose and benefits of higher education for women and men, often resulting in different priorities in the allocation of family resources for their children's education.

The patriarchal system that remains dominant in many remote areas creates a social structure in which women face pressure to prioritize domestic roles over academic achievement. Analysis of the relationship between education and gender ideology reveals that patriarchal theory, intersectionality theory, and empowerment theory provide important frameworks for understanding how social structures influence access to education based on gender (Discover Global Society, 2024). In remote areas, social expectations that women should marry early and act as housewives often conflict with aspirations to pursue higher education, creating a dilemma not faced by men to the same extent. This situation is exacerbated by the economic structure of remote communities, which is often based on physical labor or agriculture, where men's economic contributions are perceived as more important and immediate than long-term investments in women's higher education.

Family and community dynamics play a crucial role in determining gender-based support for higher education. Twenty years of gender equality research shows that gender-related issues have been a major problem placing women at a disadvantage, thus hindering economic growth and societal progress (PLOS One, 2021). In remote areas, family and community support extends beyond financial support to emotional and social support, with community approval and support crucial factors in individuals' decisions to pursue higher education. Research on diversity and sexuality education shows that education about sexual and gender identity is crucial for understanding diversity and preventing discrimination, violence, and even murder (Frontiers in Sociology, 2022). This suggests that gender equality education at the community level can play a significant role in changing public perceptions and support for women's higher education.

The transmission of gender values between generations demonstrates a complex pattern, with social change occurring gradually but unevenly in remote areas. A systematic mapping literature review on sexual and gender diversity education revealed that educational institutions worldwide still lack curricula that explicitly address gender and sexuality diversity issues (PMC, 2022). This creates an environment where traditional values regarding gender roles continue to be reinforced without a strong counter-narrative from the formal education system. In remote areas, where access to information and alternative perspectives is limited, the process of changing gender values is slower and often faces resistance from existing social structures. However, findings also suggest that when successful female role models in higher education from the same community are present, this can lead to significant changes in perceptions and foster greater public support for women's higher education.

3) Adaptation and Resilience Strategies for Remote Communities

Communities in remote areas have developed various adaptive strategies to overcome barriers to accessing higher education, with approaches often differing based on gender. Research on digital resources for gender equality education shows that various technology initiatives are being implemented worldwide to address discrimination against women, with videogames and digital resources proving effective as tools for educating, preventing, and raising awareness about social issues (Education and Information Technologies, 2023). In the context of remote areas in Indonesia, communities have adopted a communal approach where social networks and collective support play a crucial role in facilitating access to higher education, particularly through the *gotong royong* (mutual assistance) system for financial and logistical support for children continuing their education in urban areas.

Gender-based economic empowerment strategies have developed in response to limited financial resources for accessing higher education. Families in remote areas have developed various creative financing schemes, including interfamily cooperation, the education *arisan* (social savings and credit) system, and the use of agricultural products or local businesses to finance their children's education. Research on empowerment theory in the context of education and gender shows that empowering women through education can create significant multiplier effects within communities (Discover Global Society, 2024). In some remote areas, women who successfully complete higher education return to their communities and act as agents of change, both through economic contributions and as role models, transforming community perceptions of women's abilities and potential.

The use of digital technology as an adaptation strategy demonstrates an interesting pattern in which gender influences access to and utilization of technology for education. Gender Digital Divide research indicates that gender equality in education is a key target for social justice and sustainable development, with the gender digital divide in ICT and education having a complex relationship, particularly in Latin American countries (Education Research, 2021). In the Indonesian context, communities in remote areas have developed collective strategies to access the internet and educational information, including through the formation of community-based study groups, utilizing public facilities such as village halls or schools for internet access, and sharing information through informal social networks. Women and men exhibit different adaptation patterns, with women tending to be more active in seeking information through informal social networks, while men focus more on the technical aspects of technology access.

Community resilience in facing the challenges of higher education is also reflected in the development of informal support institutions that serve as bridges between individual aspirations and structural limitations. Many remote areas have developed informal mentorship systems where university alumni from the area act as advisors to juniors who wish to pursue higher education. Research on sustainable higher education with gender equity shows that sustainability in higher education is a key factor for communities, and women play a fundamental role. However, gender faces a series of inequalities in this area (Sustainability, 2024). This mentorship system not only provides practical guidance on the application process and adaptation to higher education but also serves as a crucial emotional and psychological support system for students from remote areas. Interestingly, this system demonstrates a gender-responsive evolution, with female mentors tending to focus more on holistic aspects of self-development and survival strategies in academic environments, while male mentors emphasize technical aspects and career planning.

b. Discussion

1) Structural Barriers: A Perspective of Bourdieu's Social Capital and Cultural Capital Theory

The analysis of structural barriers to access to higher education based on gender in remote areas can be comprehensively understood through Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical framework of social capital and cultural capital. Bourdieu's work emphasizes structural constraints and unequal access to institutional resources based on class, gender, and race. Bourdieu viewed social capital as a property of the individual, rather than the collective, derived primarily from one's social position and status (Social Capital Research, 2024). In the context of remote areas, the unequal distribution of social capital creates conditions where access to information, networks, and higher education resources becomes a privilege accessible only to certain groups. The limitations of technological and information infrastructure in remote areas are not merely technical issues but reflect the reproduction of systemic structural inequalities, where social position and gender determine an individual's ability to access and utilize educational resources.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus provides a relevant framework for analyzing how individual experiences in remote areas are shaped by the intersection of gender, class, and geographic location. Individual experiences may depend significantly on habitus and characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, ability, and so forth. Some of the tastes, preferences, and practices learners might be judged on could include dialect or accent, branded clothing, and possession of digital devices (Hart, 2019). In remote areas, the established habitus often does not align with the expectations and requirements of higher education institutions, which are predominantly located in urban areas. Women from remote areas face a double disadvantage: they must not only overcome the cultural gap between remote and urban areas but also confront gender bias inherent in the structure and culture of higher education institutions.

Social capital theory in the context of education suggests that social relationships are resources that can lead to the development and accumulation of human capital. For example, a stable family environment can support educational attainment and the development of highly valued and rewarded skills and credentials (ScienceDirect, 2024). However, in remote areas, access to social networks that can facilitate higher education is very limited. These limitations have a gender-differentiated impact, with women often having more limited access to formal and informal networks that can provide information and support for pursuing higher education. This analysis reveals that structural barriers are not simply individual issues, but rather manifestations of a broader system that reproduces inequalities based on gender, class, and geographic location.

2) The Cultural Construction of Gender: An Analysis Through Intersectionality Theory

The cultural and social dynamics of gender construction and education in remote areas can be analyzed in depth through the framework of intersectionality theory, which provides a comprehensive understanding of how multiple identities interact to create unique experiences. Growing from the work of Black feminist scholars and activists, intersectionality argues that individual identities such as gender, race, sexuality, and others overlap and intersect, reflecting macro-level forms of oppression and privilege, such as sexism, racism, and heteronormativity (International Journal for Equity in Health, 2021). In the context of remote areas in Indonesia, the intersection of gender, social class, ethnicity, and geographic location creates complex experiences where women face multiple layers of disadvantage that cannot be understood through gender analysis alone. The application of intersectionality in educational analysis shows that race, class, and gender are emblematic of the three systems of oppression that most intersectional researchers examine. Intersectionality, as an analytical framework, helps

education researchers, policymakers, and practitioners better understand how race and gender intersect to generate varying amounts of penalty and privilege (Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education, 2021). In remote areas of Indonesia, this intersection involves not only race and gender but also geographic dimensions, creating isolated disadvantage. Women from remote areas face not only patriarchal expectations regarding traditional gender roles but also stigma and stereotypes regarding academic ability and intellectual capacity associated with their region of origin. This condition creates internalized oppression, where women from remote areas often have self-doubt about their ability to succeed in higher education.

Intersectionality theory also reveals that human experience is jointly shaped by multiple social positions (e.g., race, gender) and cannot be adequately understood by considering social positions independently (ScienceDirect, 2021). In the cultural context of remote areas, traditional gender norms are often reinforced by economic, religious, and local customary factors, creating a complex web of expectations and limitations for women. Intersectional analysis reveals that strategies to increase access to higher education for women in remote areas cannot focus solely on gender but must consider how gender identity interacts with other factors to create barriers or opportunities. This approach also demonstrates the importance of recognizing the agency and resistance developed by women in remote areas in navigating multiple constraints to achieve their educational aspirations.

3) Adaptation Strategies: A Resilience and Community Empowerment Theory Perspective

The analysis of adaptation strategies developed by communities in remote areas can be understood through the framework of resilience and community empowerment theory, which emphasizes the capacity of individuals and communities to not only survive but also thrive in the face of structural challenges. Resilience theory in the context of education recognizes that communities possess inherent strengths and resources that can be mobilized to overcome barriers to accessing higher education. In remote areas, resilience is manifested not only at the individual level but also at the community level through the development of collective support systems, informal networks, and local innovations that are responsive to specific community needs. These strategies demonstrate that despite facing significant structural limitations, remote communities possess strong agency in developing creative and sustainable solutions.

The community empowerment perspective provides a framework for understanding how communities in remote areas develop collective capacity to overcome gender-based barriers to accessing higher education. Empowerment in this context involves not only increasing access to material resources but also transforming consciousness and developing critical awareness of structural inequalities that affect educational access. In many remote areas, this empowerment process begins at the grassroots level through community initiatives that integrate local values with modern educational aspirations. Women often play a central role in this empowerment process, not only as beneficiaries but also as change agents, catalyzing the transformation of community perspectives on the importance of higher education for women.

The integration of resilience and community empowerment theories reveals that adaptation strategies in remote areas have unique characteristics, where individual agency and collective action mutually reinforce each other in creating sustainable pathways to higher education. Digital adaptation strategies developed by remote communities demonstrate the community's ability to utilize technology not only as a tool for accessing information but also as a medium for building support networks that transcend geographical boundaries. Mentorship systems and peer support networks that develop organically within remote communities reflect local wisdom in integrating traditional values with modern aspirations, creating a contextually relevant and culturally sensitive empowerment model. This analysis demonstrates that adaptation strategies

developed by remote communities serve not only as coping mechanisms but also as a foundation for broader social transformation to achieve gender equality in access to higher education.

4. Conclusion

This analysis of gender in access to higher education in remote areas reveals complexities that require a multidimensional approach to understand the intersection of structural, cultural, and individual factors that shape gendered educational experiences. The research findings indicate that structural barriers, including limited infrastructure, financing systems, and institutional biases, create multiple disadvantages for communities in remote areas, with varying impacts based on gender. Cultural constructions of gender roles, which remain strongly embedded in remote areas, interact with geographic and economic factors to create different expectations and limitations for women and men in accessing higher education. However, this research also reveals that communities in remote areas possess strong agency in developing innovative and sustainable adaptation strategies, with women often acting as change agents in transforming community perspectives on the importance of higher education based on gender equality.

The implications of this research finding point to the need for policy development and interventions that not only focus on addressing structural barriers but also recognize and leverage the existing strengths and resources developed by remote communities. An approach that integrates top-down and bottom-up perspectives can be more effective in creating sustainable pathways to increase access to higher education based on gender equality in remote areas. This research contributes to the literature on gender and education by providing in-depth insights into the specific dynamics occurring in remote areas, while also providing an analytical framework that can be used to develop contextually relevant and culturally sensitive interventions. Future research should further explore the impact of adaptation strategies developed by remote communities and analyze how policy interventions can be more effective in supporting and scaling up local innovation to achieve gender equality in access to higher education.

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