

What works, for whom, and how? A rapid review of programs to shift adolescent gender norms and attitudes in and through schools

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ShiftEd Alliance

The ShiftEd Alliance is a coalition of twelve organizations working across Africa, Asia, and Latin America to generate the evidence, tools, and momentum to shift adolescent gender norms in the classroom and beyond.

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Summary

This rapid review synthesizes evidence on school-based programs designed to shift adolescent gender norms and attitudes in low- and middle-income countries. It focuses on rigorously conducted quantitative studies with the aim of informing understanding of what approaches do and do not work to foster more equitable gender norms and attitudes, and to highlight gaps in the research.

Among 29,862 citations identified, 30 studies (33 papers) met review criteria. Most evaluated programs were concentrated in Asia (19), followed by Africa (10), and Latin America (1). The majority of programs (18 studies) targeted both girls and boys together, ten studies targeted girls/young women only, and two studies targeted boys/young men only. The gender norm, attitude, or related indicators measured by each of these 30 studies included a wide range of scales and items, including attitudes regarding different gender roles and responsibilities, agreement with gender-stereotypical traits and behaviors, attitudes regarding gender equity in household chores, agreement with differential treatment of boys and girls, perception of gender norms regarding education, and the GEM Scale, among others.

Out of 30 programs, 24 (80%) led to gender norms or attitudes among adolescents becoming significantly more equitable. Evaluation designs of included studies were sufficient to establish whether a program works, but few directly measured which elements within it were driving change. Nonetheless, a few patterns emerge: Multi-level programming (combining components directed at adolescents with activities engaging parents, schools, and/or communities) and participatory, facilitated group approaches that encourage critical reflection among participants are promising approaches. Light touch gender content is usually too small a dose to sufficiently shift gender norms and attitudes. A fair number of research gaps are highlighted, including the importance of longer-term follow-up, direct comparison of different program components, and greater use of common, validated measures of adolescent gender norms and attitudes to strengthen comparability across studies and inform understanding within and beyond the gender and education space.

Introduction

This review synthesizes evidence on school-based programs designed to shift adolescent gender norms and attitudes in low- and middle-income countries. It focuses on rigorously conducted quantitative studies with the aim of informing ShiftEd Alliance's understanding of what approaches do and do not work to make gender norms more equitable. It also aims to contribute to the wider field, highlighting evidence, research gaps, and emerging lessons for practitioners, donors, researchers, and policymakers. Consolidating quantitative evidence to-date is timely given the growing interest and momentum around gender and education work, publication of enough rigorous studies to allow examination of lessons and gaps, and the opposition to gender equality and human rights surging around the globe.

Education is a fundamental human right long-identified as vital to realizing other rights, lifting marginalized people out of poverty, ensuring sustainable development, maintaining peace, eliminating inequalities, and contributing to the “full development of the human personality” (United Nations, 1948; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Sustainable Development Goals; UNESCO 2026). Indeed, higher levels of education and learning have been empirically linked with better later life outcomes for women (Kaffenberger and Pritchett 2021, Mensch et al 2019, Psaki et al 2019). Yet the web of factors that underlie health, economic prosperity, civic participation, and freedom from violence means that education alone cannot guarantee equitable school experiences, learning outcomes, or life trajectories. Despite impressive improvements in education enrollment and attainment, gender inequities remain entrenched across economic, political, and safety domains. Where advances have been made, it has often been paltry, and, disturbingly, backsliding on gender equality is increasingly evident across multiple contexts (UNRISD and UN Women, 2025). Women's political representation, for instance, has inched upward since the mid-1990s, but remains far from equal: as of January 2025, women held just 27.2% of seats in national parliaments—up from

11.3% in 1995 (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2025), and women's representation in local government has stagnated at 35.5% (UN Statistics Division, 2025). In the economic sector, women hold less than a third (30%) of managerial positions worldwide, and at the current pace of progress, gender parity in management lies nearly a century away (UN Statistics Division, 2025). Violence against women and girls remains a global crisis: nearly one in three women—an estimated 840 million globally—have experienced partner or sexual violence during their lifetime (WHO 2025), with progress in reducing intimate partner violence averaging only a 0.2% annual decline over the past two decades (Yount et al., 2024).

Inequitable gender norms underlie many of these persisting disparities. Gender norms have been linked to intimate partner violence (Fulu et al., 2013), to women's reduced participation in political life (OECD 2025; Inglehart et al, 2003), and to worse economic outcomes for women, including reduced labor force participation and the gender wage gap (Cortés et al., 2026).

Gender norms are the shared expectations and unwritten rules that guide how individuals are expected to behave, interact, and contribute within their families, communities, and workplaces based on their gender. These norms are sustained by social approval and disapproval—people often comply because they believe others expect them to, and anticipate social consequences if they don't. Shaped by historical and sociocultural context, norms become embedded in institutions over time. Since they confine people to specific roles, gender norms can limit individual choices, opportunities, and personal expression. (ShiftEd Alliance, Working Definition 2026)

Gender attitudes are the beliefs, opinions, and evaluations a person holds about the roles, rights, capabilities, and appropriate conduct of women/girls and men/boys. For example, whether someone believes girls are as capable as boys in math and science, whether they think a woman should be able to refuse sex with her husband, or whether they agree that men make better political leaders. They are internal and individual: what a person thinks.

Gendered behaviors are the observable actions and practices a person engages in that are patterned by gender. They are what a person actually does. For example, in some settings girls are unlikely to stay in school past the secondary level, or men are unlikely to help with household chores and caregiving.

Importantly, however, gender norms are mutable. A growing evidence base demonstrates that well-designed programs can shift gender norms and attitudes and improve health outcomes and reduce gender-based violence. Interventions targeting gender norms and attitudes among men and boys, for example, can improve sexual and reproductive health outcomes for both men and women (Gottert et al., 2025). Among programs to “transform attitudes, beliefs, and norms,” Ullman and colleagues found that community mobilization programs and group-based workshops with women and men have demonstrated success in reducing violence against women and girls (Ullman et al, 2025). More recently, the education sector has begun to implement and evaluate programs explicitly aimed at shifting gender norms in and through schools (UNGEI et al 2021; Report on the 2022 Transforming Education Summit).

Schools offer unique advantages and pose distinct challenges for work on gender norms and attitudes. The most obvious fundamental advantage of schools is scale. Schools offer a reach that few other institutions can match. They provide a regular, reliable mechanism for engaging large numbers of young people over sustained periods of time, while leveraging existing

infrastructure rather than requiring the construction of new delivery platforms. Beyond scale, schools play an important role in the reproduction of gender norms. Schools are among society’s primary institutions through which gendered scripts are absorbed, rehearsed, and reinforced—in every classroom, in every grade, every school day. This makes schools not only a site where inequitable norms are transmitted, but also a key site where they can be actively contested.

There may be additional advantages of delivering gender norms programming through participatory, facilitated groups in schools specifically. Schools may be very good at leveraging social network effects. Groups formed in schools are not arbitrary gatherings of individuals, they are existing friend groups and social networks (Edmonds et al., 2023). This matters for gender norms change because peer groups are a primary reference group through which adolescents form and revise beliefs about what is normal, acceptable, and expected. Reaching adolescents within their existing peer networks, rather than in groups convened for an intervention, may amplify the social reinforcement of attitudinal change.

At the same time, education systems are structural and the systems and power hierarchies in place in schools can make it difficult to advance gender equity. Any focus on schools must contend with complex structural realities such as deeply patriarchal school hierarchies, gender-segregated spaces, and systemic teacher biases that can actively undermine or dilute a weekly, brief participatory session.

Additionally, the participatory pedagogy that is common in gender norms shifting work is a very different form of pedagogy than many teachers are used to and feel comfortable with and can be difficult to implement in overcrowded classrooms (Marcus et al 2024). Implementing learner-centered and participatory pedagogies via extra-curricular clubs or external facilitators to use this approach in the regular classroom can undermine the extent to which a program can be scaled.

Of course, school-based delivery reaches only adolescents who are in school. Those who are out of school are often among the most marginalized—the poorest, those already married or parenting, and those who are displaced or working—and arguably in greatest need. Reaching them requires community-

based approaches. Nonetheless, education systems are widespread and reach the majority of adolescents in most settings. Reaching out-of-school adolescents is an important issue but does not negate the value of working in schools.

The body of research on programs working with schools to shift gender norms is young, but ripe for review. Existing reviews have not yet examined this topic among causal studies, leaving a critical gap in the academic literature. On the one side, reviews of education interventions have understandably largely focused on programs' effects on education outcomes – such as enrollment, attainment, and learning – rather than on gender norms or attitudes (e.g., Alvarez-Marinelli et al., 2025; Evans and Yuan 2021; Snilstveit et al., 2015). Conversely, reviews of gender transformative programs have predominantly been conducted in other sectors, including HIV prevention, reproductive health, intimate partner violence, and child marriage. These reviews tend not to distinguish between school-based and community-based interventions, rarely look at education outcomes, and/or, inherently, exclude programs that do not originate from the topical sector under review (Gottert et al., 2025; Mmari et al., 2024; Levy et al., 2020; Yount et al., 2017).

This rapid review aims to fill that gap. It focuses specifically on gender norms shifting programs implemented in, or closely engaged with, schools or education systems, and is inclusive of all relevant programs regardless of their sector of origin – whether reproductive health, violence prevention, gender equity, or life skills education. We examine the following questions:

- 1. What rigorous evaluations of programs and initiatives to shift gender norms in or with schools exist, and how do they vary by setting, design, population, and intervention type?**
- 2. Are these programs effective at shifting gender norms or attitudes among adolescents?**
- 3. Which design and implementation features distinguish programs that successfully shift gender norms and attitudes toward equity from those that do not?**
- 4. What gaps and open questions about gender norms shifting programs in or with schools emerge from this literature?**

Methods

This rapid systematic review was conducted to identify and synthesize evidence from rigorous evaluations of gender norms shifting programs implemented in or closely engaged with schools in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).¹ Rapid reviews balance the need for rigor with resource constraints that can impede timely use of evidence. Compared to traditional systematic reviews, rapid reviews often limit search results by restricting the time period of publications (we restricted to past 20 years) and/or the number of databases searched (we limited to five databases plus grey literature) and relying on a single reviewer for abstract and full-text review (Haby et al., 2016; Garritty et al., 2024).

The review followed a structured search and screening process, guided by a priori inclusion and exclusion criteria developed by the research team. Given the broad scope of the review and the diversity of sectors in which relevant programs have been evaluated, the search strategy was designed to be inclusive across disciplines, drawing on literature from education, reproductive health, gender-based violence prevention, and youth development, among others. Studies were identified through systematic database searches supplemented by targeted searches of institutional and gray literature. Titles, abstracts, and full texts were screened by team members. Data were extracted using a standardized template. The sections below describe the inclusion and exclusion criteria, search strategy, and screening approach in detail.

Eligibility criteria

Inclusion criteria

Studies were eligible for inclusion if they met all of the following criteria:

- Study population consisted predominantly of adolescents and/or youth between the ages of 10 and 24
- Study was conducted in a school setting, broadly defined to include programs delivered within schools or in close partnership with educational institutions
- Study was conducted in a low- or middle-income country, as classified by the World Bank
- Study evaluated an intervention related to gender norms, gender attitudes, gender bias, gender stereotypes, or conceptually related constructs
- Study assessed gender norms, attitudes, or related constructs, as an outcome
- Study was published in past 20 years
- Study was published in English
- The study appeared in a peer-reviewed journal article, institutional report, or working paper

Exclusion criteria

Studies were excluded if they met one or more of the following criteria:

- Studies in which >50% of participants were older than 24 years
- Studies relying exclusively on qualitative data were excluded, given the review's emphasis on quantitative evidence of intervention impact
- Studies without a control or comparison group were excluded, as the absence of a counterfactual precludes causal inference about program effects
- Studies that did not report on an evaluated intervention were excluded—this encompassed prevalence studies drawing on demographic surveys, study protocols, and descriptive analyses
- Studies that assessed gender norms or attitudes only as a baseline characteristic, predictor, etc. (as opposed to a measured outcome)

¹ By 'rigorous' we mean quantitative studies with designs that support causal inference. For example, those with a control or comparison group, and address endogeneity and other threats to internal validity. See inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Search strategy

We worked closely with an informationist at Columbia University Health Sciences Libraries to guide our search strategy. We began by identifying four key concepts to include in our literature search: adolescents, schools or school-based interventions, gender norms and attitudes, and lower- and middle-income countries. For each concept, we created a list of keywords and Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) to search in PubMed. Keyword searches only included keywords appearing in article titles and abstracts. After generating our initial list of MeSH terms, we used the following tools to identify additional terms and then tested their relevance: Yale MeSH Analyzer, PubMed PubReMiner, and MeSH on Demand.

To ensure that the search strategy was broad enough to capture relevant articles, we identified five key articles that aligned with our research question and ran our searches in PubMed and Web of Science (MeSH terms were not included in Web of Science search). The first iteration of our search queries did not yield these five articles. This led us to remove the school-related concept from our search strategy. Although the school-based component was key to our research question, we found that many articles that described school-based or school-related interventions did not explicitly include related keywords in their title or abstract. We therefore concluded that we would need to screen for this criterion during the full-text stage.

After search terms were finalized for PubMed and Web of Science, search queries were translated and executed in Embase, PsycINFO, and ERIC.

Additional articles were identified through existing reviews and recommendations from partners. Citations in review articles were used to identify additional articles to add to the title/abstract screening phase. ShiftEd Alliance, our partner in this work, and its member organizations also provided a list of recommended articles and reports.

Title and abstract screening

The study authors conducted all screening, reviewing, and extraction. Citations were uploaded into Covidence systematic review software. Covidence automatically detected and removed 9,954 duplicates,

and we manually detected an additional 243. Two team members then reviewed 100 abstracts to ensure consistency across reviewers and discussed discrepancies until a consensus was reached. From then on, the study team divided up the articles and decisions about whether to move an abstract to the next phase were made by a single reviewer. Five thousand abstracts were reviewed in Covidence using this model. Covidence uses a machine learning algorithm, which sorts articles by relevance and presents most likely matches first as it learns from reviewers' include/exclude decisions. We screened abstracts in Covidence until we began to see fewer relevant titles and abstracts, then exported the remaining articles (n=14,474) to a .csv file.

With the assistance of Microsoft Copilot, we wrote Excel Power Query code to apply labels to help us sort, cluster and screen articles. We created a new "keywords" column, which searched the title and abstracts for keywords that were likely to lead to exclusion (e.g., malaria, antibiotic, schizophrenia) and applied these labels to each article. Then, we reviewed all articles flagged with a specific keyword. While this did not eliminate human eyes reviewing each citation, it significantly sped up the title and abstract review.

Full-text screening

Full-text articles were assessed for eligibility. All full-text articles were read by a single reviewer, who flagged specific articles for a second reviewer to provide additional review as needed.

Analysis

Data were extracted into a standardized template capturing study characteristics (e.g., author, country, study design, sample, etc.), intervention features (e.g., program elements, delivery agent, duration, etc.), gender norm or attitude outcomes, and other outcomes (e.g., gendered behavior, education, etc.). Results were synthesized narratively, with study findings tabulated and compared by program and study characteristics. A program was classified as effective if it reported a statistically significant improvement ($p < 0.05$) in at least one gender norm, attitude, or related outcome, even if the program had no significant effect on other outcomes. Patterns in effectiveness

were examined both within and across studies. Within studies, we drew on direct comparisons where the study design itself contrasted different program variations; across studies, we examined effectiveness by program characteristics to identify factors potentially associated with shifts in gender norms or attitudes.

Results

Results of the search

Our search of databases resulted in 29,862 citations (see Figure 1, PRISMA Flowchart). We removed duplicates (10,197), added citations (23) identified in review articles, and added partners' recommendations (40), resulting in 19,728 citations and abstracts to screen. Following screening, 294 articles proceeded to full-text review. Of these, 33 papers representing findings from 30 studies were included in our final review. Most were published in peer-reviewed journals, only six were reports. The 30 studies examined 27 different interventions/initiatives, with one intervention studied separately in three different settings, and another intervention studied separately in two different countries.

Descriptive Characteristics of Included Studies

The included studies (see Appendix Table 1) span a range of geographic settings, program approaches, target populations, and study designs, and are described in detail below.

Publication Trends

The included studies are heavily concentrated in the past five years, reflecting the growth of rigorous evaluation activity in this area (see Figure 2).

Of the 30 included studies, only 3 were published before 2017 (one each in 2011, 2014, and 2016).

Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart

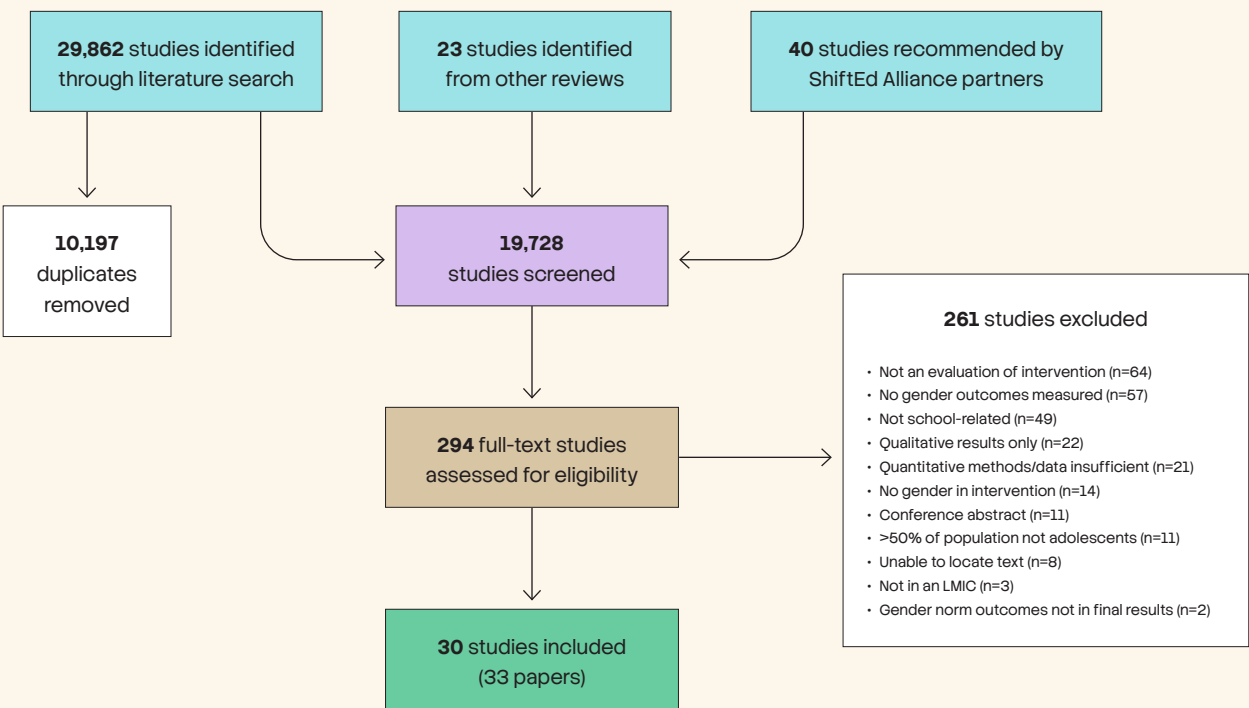
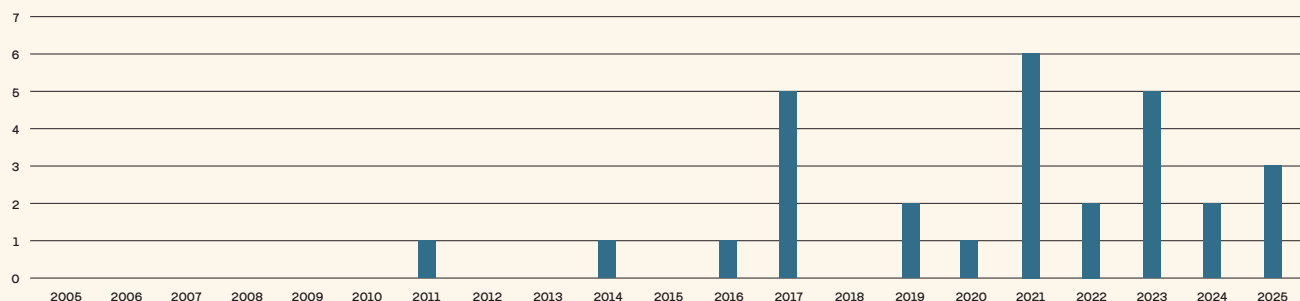


Figure 2. Number of studies published by year



**Note: Missing one study with no date specified (likely 2021, possibly 2022)*

The pace of publication accelerated from 2017 onward: five studies were published in 2017, followed by two in 2019, one in 2020, six in 2021, two in 2022, five in 2023, two in 2024, and three in 2025. Fully 27 (90%) of the 30 included studies were published in 2017 or later, and 19 (63%) were published in 2021 or later. This pattern suggests that the field of transforming gender norms through education is both nascent and expanding, with the bulk of qualifying quantitative studies generated within the past five years.

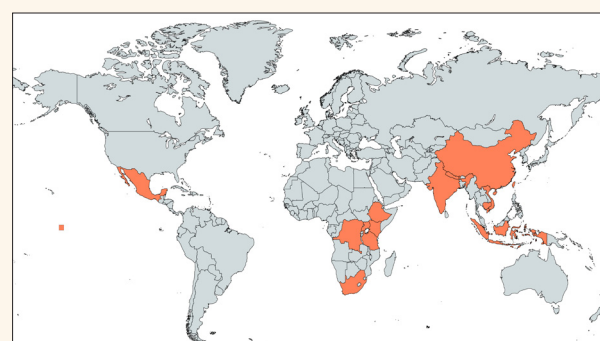
Geographic Distribution

The 30 included studies were conducted across three regions, with a pronounced concentration in Asia (see Figure 3). Nineteen studies were conducted in Asia, with India accounting for the largest share by far (11 studies), followed by China and Indonesia (2 each), and Cambodia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Vietnam (1 each). Ten studies were conducted in sub-Saharan Africa, spanning the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya (2), South Africa (3), Tanzania, and Uganda (2). A single study was conducted in Latin America (Mexico). The heavy representation of India and South Asia more broadly reflects both the volume of programmatic activity in the region and the availability of rigorous evaluations; the relatively sparse representation of Latin America and francophone Africa may reflect both a genuine gap in evaluated programs and limitations of an English-language search.

Target Population

Programs varied by whether they targeted female adolescents only, male adolescents only, or both sexes. The majority of programs (18 studies) targeted both girls and boys together, ten studies targeted girls/young women only, and two studies targeted

Figure 3. Study locations



Asia (19)		Africa (10)	Latin America (1)
Cambodia	Nepal	DRC	Mexico
China (2)	Pakistan	Ethiopia	
India (11)	Vietnam	Kenya (2)	
Indonesia (2)		South Africa (3)	
		Tanzania	
		Uganda (2)	

boys/young men only. We note that this breakdown is a description of the target populations in the studies included in this review, the breakdown is not representative of all such programs.

Grade Levels Targeted

Programs were implemented across primary/lower primary, middle/upper primary, and secondary school levels, with the strongest concentration in upper primary grades (Figure 4). Approximately 20 studies targeted middle school students (roughly grades 6–8), 14 targeted secondary school students (roughly grades 9–11), and 3 targeted primary school students (roughly grades 3–5). None were conducted in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) schools.

(Note that these figures sum to more than 30 because some programs spanned multiple school levels.) Again, we note that this breakdown is not representative of all such programs, nor does it represent an ideal target grade—this is simply descriptive of the sample of studies included in this review.

Figure 4. Grades covered by programs*

~Primary (~grades 3-5)	~Middle (~grades 6-8)	~Secondary (~grades 9-11)
3	20	14

**Estimated, as information provided was sometimes for the study, not necessarily the intervention*

Program Type

As described further below, almost every program included participatory facilitated groups. However, the included studies reflected considerable diversity in their programmatic and sectoral origins. Defining them loosely by the primary sector from which each intervention was designed and/or the main change mechanism it employed, programs roughly clustered into seven broad types (see Figure 5). The

most common type was life skills or social-emotional learning (SEL) with gender equity content (9 studies, including two distinct Girls' Education Programs), followed by participatory, curriculum-based, facilitated groups focused explicitly on shifting gender norms and attitudes (6 studies, including three distinct Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS) programs, and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) or reproductive health and HIV education incorporating gender norms content (6 studies).

Also well represented were multi-level programs engaging adolescents, parents, and/or community members to promote gender-equitable norms. This included 3 studies where this was the programs' defining feature, as well as 9 other programs. The latter (designated with "*" in Figure 5) included GEMS, Discover Learning, Girls' Education Program, Skhokho, Positive Child and Youth Development Programme (PCYDP), Plan-It Girls, Planning Ahead for Girls' Empowerment and Employability (PAGE), Childhood to Livelihood (C2L), and *Amor...pero del Bueno*. These were also multi-level in design, working primarily with students but also with parents, teachers, and/or community members, however for this particular clustering we prioritized their originating domain. Additional program types included violence prevention programming with gender norms components (2 studies), participatory, curriculum-based, facilitated groups with boys and men addressing masculinities and gender equity (2 studies), and technology-based education with gender norms content (2 studies).

Figure 5. Program types—primary sector of origin or mechanism of change

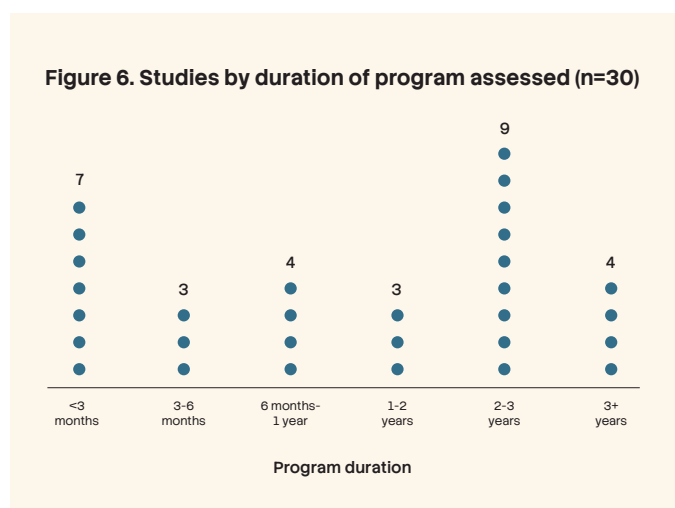
Group education focused on shifting gender norms/attitudes	Life skills or SEL education with gender norms/equity content	CSE/RH & HIV education with gender norms/equity content	Violence prevention with gender norms/equity content	Group education with boys/men addressing masculinities and gender equity	Multi-level program with adolescents and parents or community promoting gender equitable norms*	Tech-based education with gender norms/equity content
• GEMS** (3) • Taaron ki Toli • Body image comic • TIPSH Integrative Learning	• Discover Learning** • Girls' Education Program** (2) • Skhokho** • PCYDP** • Plan-It Girls** • Girls First Program • PAGE** • C2L**	• Nia Project • SETARA • CSE (no name) • SKILLZ • Empowerment CSE • Journey4Life	• No Means No • Amor...pero del Bueno**	• YMOT • Parivartan	• GUG • UMANG • GEC Project (no name)	• You and Me • Peace

** Other programs that were multi-level are noted with "**"*

*** Program is multi-level and also works with parents, teachers, and/or community, etc.*

Program Duration

Programs varied considerably in duration, ranging from short-term interventions of less than three months to multi-year programs (Figure 6). Seven studies evaluated programs of less than three months in duration; three evaluated programs lasting three to six months; four evaluated programs of six months to under one year; three evaluated programs of one to under two years; nine evaluated programs of two to under three years; and four evaluated programs of three or more years. Thus, while there were some short-term programs, most (about two-thirds) of the programs were 6 months or longer. One-third lasted 2 or more years.



Study Design and Sample Size

Of the 30 included studies, 17 were randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and 13 were quasi-experimental in design. Sample sizes varied but were generally robust. Three studies had fewer than 500 adolescent participants; six had between 500 and 1,000; six had between 1,001 and 2,000; twelve had between 2,001 and 5,000; and three had more than 5,000 participants. We note these are the sample sizes for the evaluation of the program; some programs reached over 50,000 adolescents.

Measured Outcomes

The gender norm, attitude, or related indicators measured by each of these 30 studies included a wide range of scales and items, with little overlap across studies. These included attitudes regarding different gender roles and responsibilities, agreement with gender-stereotypical traits and behaviors, attitudes

regarding gender equity in household chores, agreement with differential treatment of boys and girls, perception of gender norms regarding education, and the GEM Scale, among others. For simplicity, in the remainder of the paper we refer to these different constructs as a group as 'gender norms and attitudes.'

Other outcomes assessed by the studies included gendered behavior and indicators from other sectors. Gendered behaviors, including boys sharing or helping their sister with chores, were tracked by two studies. Nine studies assessed education-related outcomes, but only three of these were learning related. Other education outcomes included enrollment, progression, attendance, and aspirations. Life skills and mindsets were reported by 15 studies, and health-related indicators by 12 studies. Eighteen studies tracked violence indicators, including attitudes, knowledge, experience, perpetration, corporal punishment, and bystander intervention. Finally, only two studies measured economic outcomes.

Effectiveness, Promising Approaches, and Emerging Questions

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Three-quarters of programs successfully shifted adolescent gender norms and attitudes to be more equitable.

A central question motivating this review was whether programs implemented in or with schools can shift adolescents' gender norms and attitudes.² The evidence suggests a clear affirmative answer: **24 out of 30 programs (80%) led to gender norms or attitudes among adolescents becoming significantly**

² As noted above, while different studies measured different constructs, including gender attitudes (most common), views on gender norms, descriptive gender norms, agreement with gender stereotypes, etc., we refer to them as 'gender norms and attitudes' for ease.

more equitable (see Appendix Table 2). Six of the studies found no significant change in the measured gender norms and attitudes. Equally important is that only one study found any indicator that significantly shifted gender norms and attitudes to be more egalitarian (Pinandari et al., 2023). These two negative effects, however, were among other indicators tracked by the study that showed change toward more equitable views. Furthermore, given the multiple indicators, sites, and subpopulations assessed in this study, the detected egalitarian effect on the two indicators may be due to chance.³

The finding that about three-quarters of programs successfully shifted adolescent gender norms and attitudes is consistent with related reviews. For example, Levy and colleagues (2020) found that 45 (74%) of 61 rigorously evaluated programs addressing gender inequality and restrictive gender norms to improve health demonstrated significant improvements in health and gender equality indicators. The similarity between this current review of school-based programs and Levy et al.'s review spanning multiple sectors suggests that gender norms and attitudes among adolescents are responsive to well-designed interventions, and that schools represent a viable and effective platform for this work.

Two studies, in addition to measuring gender norms and attitudes, also measured gendered behavior, such as boys helping with chores, or supporting sisters' career aspirations. One, a randomized controlled trial assessing the effects of Breakthrough's Taaron ki Toli program in Haryana, India, found significant program impact not only on girls' and boys' gender attitudes, but also on self-reported gendered behaviors, both at the first follow-up a couple of months after the program ended (0.20 standard deviations, $p < 0.001$), and two years later (0.23 standard deviations, $p < 0.001$). At both timepoints, when disaggregated by sex, the self-reported effects were significantly larger for boys than girls (Dhar et al., 2022).

The second study, a quasi-experimental evaluation of Growing Up GREAT! (GUG) in Kinshasa, DRC, asked boys

whether they helped their sisters with chores, and asked girls whether their brothers helped them. Although the program shifted some of the gender attitudes and stereotypes participants held, it had no effect on these reported gendered behaviors. On its own, this finding might suggest that shifting adolescent gender attitudes is not enough to change gendered behavior, which remains constrained by the norms and practices operating in families and communities. Further adjusted analyses, however, complicate this: both boys and girls who retained or adopted gender equitable attitudes toward chore-sharing between Waves 1 and 2 were more likely to report gender equitable chore-sharing behavior than those who held or moved toward gender inequitable attitudes over the same period (boys: adjusted OR 1.9, $p < 0.001$; girls: adjusted OR 1.5, $p = 0.005$) (Barker et al., 2022). Attitudes and behavior were therefore linked at the individual level, even though the intervention did not move behavior. This points to a gap between changing attitudes and changing what adolescents can actually do: equitable attitudes may support, though not guarantee, equitable behavior.

What Program Elements Are Critical for Success?

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Evaluation designs were sufficient to establish whether a program works, but not which elements within it were driving change.**
- **Exceptions suggest that a multi-level approach—combining components directed at adolescents with activities engaging parents, schools, and/or communities—produced significantly stronger positive effects than single-level approaches.**

³ For example, boys in one of the program/study sites (out of 3) were significantly more likely to agree with gender stereotypical roles following the intervention, however boys in another site were significantly less likely to agree, and there was no significant change in the 3rd site for boys. Girls in two sites had a significant reduction in agreement with gender stereotypical roles and there was no change for girls at a third site.

A significant limitation of the current quantitative evidence base is that it offers limited insight into which specific program elements or combinations of elements drive effectiveness. The majority of

included studies (24 of 30) employed a simple two-arm design comparing a program to a no-program control or comparison condition, which, while sufficient to establish whether a program works, usually does not directly test what elements within a program are driving change. This gap has consequences for scale-up, as knowing that a program works does not tell implementers which of its components to preserve when adapting it to new contexts or constraints. Multi-arm and factorial designs can isolate a program's impactful elements, and measuring and reporting implementation and nuanced data allows the understanding of more granular evidence needed for scale up.

Four notable exceptions provide some insight into this question, specifically regarding the value of multi-level programs. A multi-level program is one that targets not only adolescents themselves but also the multiple levels of their social environment, such as families, peers, schools, and communities. The premise being that adolescent attitudes and behaviors are shaped by these surrounding influences and are more likely to shift when interventions address them as well. Notably, none of the six programs that had no effect on gender norms and attitudes used a multi-level design. About half (14) of the included studies were multi-level, combining program elements directed at adolescents and young people with activities engaging parents, schools, and/or communities. Yet only four of these explicitly tested the difference between a multi-level versus single-level program.

The first is an evaluation of the GEMS program in India, which used a three-arm design: (1) participatory, curriculum-based facilitated groups plus a week-long school-based campaign with games, competitions, debates and short plays, (2) school-based campaign only, and (3) a no-program control (Achyut et al., 2011). Both intervention arms produced significant improvements relative to the control group across multiple gender norms and attitudes outcomes—including scores on a 15-item "gender equitable measurement" scale, attitudes about girls' education, support for later age at marriage, and decreased endorsement of intimate partner violence. However, for each outcome, the effect size was consistently larger in the arm that combined participatory, facilitated groups with the school campaign, suggesting that the facilitated groups add meaningful value beyond the week-long, school-level campaigns alone.

Another is an evaluation of *Amor... pero del Bueno*, a violence prevention program in high schools in Mexico, which compared a multi-level arm (school climate intervention plus individual level intervention) to a school climate-only arm, without a pure no-program control (Sosa-Rubi et al., 2017). The school climate element comprised schoolyard activities for students and a workshop for school staff. Together, these aimed to foster a supportive environment for dating violence prevention and to create a channel for distributing information to students campus-wide. The individual level intervention included two components: classroom-based curriculum and schoolyard activities. The classroom workshops aimed to promote critical thinking about gender and dating norms and their influence on dating and to teach communication skills for diffusing difficult situations and reducing relationship conflict. The schoolyard activities provided students with opportunities to use their newly acquired knowledge and actively engage as agents of change at their school. The combined arm significantly outperformed the school climate-only arm in reducing acceptance of sexist attitudes about dating relationships and in decreasing justification of violence, though no significant difference was found between study arms for acceptance of sexist attitudes more generally.

Cherewick et al., (2021) tested three progressively more intensive versions of the Discover Learning intervention among 10–11 year-olds in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Arm A received video-based content on social-emotional mindsets and skills (six 2-hour sessions once per week); Arm B added peer-guided reflective discussion in mixed-gender small groups (six 2-hour sessions once per week); and Arm C had the same activities as Arm B and further added experiential learning activities, technology-based games and creative expression, and engagement of parents and community members (18 two-hour sessions three times per week). Across nearly all gender and SEL outcomes, Arm C demonstrated the largest improvements, Arm B intermediate gains, and Arm A the smallest, showing a dose-response pattern suggesting that each additional layer of the intervention contributed meaningfully to outcomes. For example, for gender norms, all three arms showed statistically significant gains but when compared to Arm A, Arm C's effect size ($d = 1.03$) was substantially larger than Arm B's ($d = 0.40$). For social and emotional learning, Arm C delivered significant effects (vs. Arm A) for all 10 SEL indicators measured, including purpose

($d=3.33$), persistence ($d = 1.46$), self-efficacy ($d = 0.45$), and empathy ($d = 0.08$); Arm B led to significant change (vs. Arm A) for 6 out of the 10 SEL indicators (ranging from $d=0.15$ for self-efficacy to $d = 2.55$ for purpose). In this particular study, because the amount of time that children spent in the program also varied between Arm B and Arm C, it could be that the increased time explains some or all of the difference, not just the multi-level approach.

Finally, the evaluation of the Skhokho program—a school-based gender-based violence prevention program among Grade 8 students in South Africa—compared a no-intervention arm with two treatment arms (Jewkes et al., 2019). The first treatment arm was directed at the school level and entailed a life skills curriculum with gender content, as well as training for teachers on the curriculum and positive discipline. The second arm included the school level activities as well as a family level intervention of participatory workshops for caregivers and their 8th grade children. The workshops covered topics such as parenting, gender roles, and positive discipline. Unfortunately, the study was underpowered⁴ and attendance was low. While program effects on indicators were generally in a beneficial direction, few findings were statistically significant, and it is not clear if different levels of intervention impacted outcomes.

Jewkes' results aside, the findings from the other three studies align with a **pattern in the literature suggesting that multi-level interventions produce stronger effects than single-level approaches** (Mmari et al., 2024 for gender transformative programs aimed at improving health among young adolescents; Gottert et al., 2025 for interventions engaging men and boys for improved SRHR).

There were only two other studies that teased out other program variations through their study design. Both examined the effects of different program interventions directed at individual adolescent participants (versus the multi-level comparisons with study arms directed at parents or school-level, described above). Austrian and colleagues (2021) compared a control and 3 treatment arms: sanitary

pads only, SRH education only, pads plus SRH education, with the SRH education and SRH education plus pads arms demonstrating more equitable gender norms and attitudes compared to the control. Leventhal and colleagues (2016), compared multiple treatment arms: a psychosocial resilience curriculum, a health curriculum, a combined resilience plus health curriculum, and a control, finding that the combined curriculum, which also entailed substantially more contact hours with students, had more and/or larger effects on gender attitudes and life skills indicators. The question of whether it was the combination of content, or the increased exposure hours driving the stronger outcomes in Leventhal et al., remains a question for this study.

Why Some Programs Might Not Have Worked

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Compressed or one-off content/messaging is usually too small a dose to sufficiently shift gender norms and attitudes.

Six programs did not significantly impact adolescents' gender norms or attitudes. These six programs were disproportionately drawn from two program types: CSE / HIV prevention (3 programs) and technology-based education (2 programs). Examining the characteristics of these programs reveals a suggestive pattern. Specifically, the majority (5 of 6) of the non-impactful programs devoted relatively limited attention to gender equity and gender norms content, comprising a small to medium proportion of overall program content rather than a central focus. The one remaining program that did prioritize gender equity content was a brief, light-touch intervention of approximately five hours in total. Among studies that did have an effect on gender norms and attitudes, the GEMS study in Jharkhand, India, found that when disaggregated by session exposure, all students improved but only those with the longest exposure showed significant change (0-10 sessions, not significant; 11-15 sessions, not significant; 16-25

⁴ An underpowered study doesn't have enough participants to give the analysis a fair chance of finding a real effect. Thus a null (non-significant) finding may reflect the study's limited size rather than the genuine absence of an effect.

sessions $p < 0.05$) (Achyut et al., 2017-India). While this may be due to self-selection if those who attended more sessions were more motivated or inclined to change, the association between greater exposure and program impact is worth noting.

Taken together, these characteristics point to a consistent theme: **a modest dose of gender content may be insufficient to shift attitudes**. Programs that treat gender equity as a peripheral rather than central concern, or deliver content in a compressed or one-off format appear less likely to produce change. That said, short programs are not doomed to fail. For example, Lewis-Smith and colleagues (2025) tested a six session (45-minutes per session) comic-based body image program among 11-14 year-olds in India that significantly lowered gender stereotyping. But generally, dose matters—the evidence suggests that a dash of gender is not enough.

What to Teach and How to Teach It

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- There is consensus on the use of participatory, facilitated group approaches that encourage critical reflection among participants.
- Outstanding questions remain about how to implement them well and sustain quality at scale.

Nearly all the evaluated programs described their pedagogical approach in terms consistent with the broader gender transformative literature: **participatory, curriculum-based facilitated groups with interactive activities that encourage critical reflection among participants**. This aligns with both theoretical frameworks for norm change and with empirical evidence on what works in gender transformative programming more generally (Gottert et al., 2025; Keith et al., 2023; Sell et al., 2023; Ullman et al., 2025). With one exception (the Peace program) all programs in this review used such a group-based format to work with adolescents as core mechanisms of attitude change.

Given this consensus on pedagogy, the more pressing questions for the field are less about whether to use participatory, reflective approaches, and more about *how to implement them well*. For example, how can small-scale proof of concept initiatives retain enough effectiveness when delivered at scale? How can we best sustain quality at scale and which specific tools and activities work best for different age groups, and for single-sex versus mixed-sex group settings?

On content, the topical focus of programs varied considerably, reflecting differences in originating sector (e.g., HIV prevention, life skills education, violence prevention) and local context (e.g., settings with high prevalence of child marriage). This variation is appropriate given diverse program goals, community needs, and ensuring relevance for learner-centered teaching. That said, important content-related questions remain underexplored in the current evidence base. These include whether, and which, combinations of content are synergistic: for example, do life skills such as communication and assertiveness training enhance the effectiveness of norm-shifting content around intimate partner violence? And how can school-based programs respond to the misinformation, misogyny, and harassment that adolescents encounter via digital and social media, which follows them into school and shapes the normative environment in which programs operate?

Delivering Content: Who Does the Facilitation?

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Different types of facilitators can be effective
- Teachers are strategic for sustainability and scale, but their authority can inhibit open discussion of sensitive topics and they may hold gender-role beliefs that undermine transformative content.
- NGO facilitators trained specifically in content and pedagogy are outside

authority structures, with more supportive power dynamics. But are time-limited, and integration depends on institutional goodwill that may not survive the funding cycle.

- **A hybrid model, where external facilitators deliver the initial intervention, then build teacher capacity via in-service coaching, could potentially capture both sets of strengths.**

Of the 30 studies, 28 reported who delivered the content. Over half (17) used NGO-hired facilitators or coaches, or women or young people drawn from the community, and nine trained teachers to deliver the content; the remaining two used both teachers and project staff, each delivering different parts of the program. Most papers offered little further detail about the facilitators, and no study explicitly compared facilitator types (teachers vs. NGO/community, gender of facilitator, or adult vs. young person) or different training and supervision approaches. Heterogeneity across programs was too great to support definitive conclusions. Nonetheless, we found that among the facilitated programs, teacher-facilitated programs were effective in 8 of 9 cases, NGO- or community member-facilitated programs in 11 of 12, and the two programs that combined teachers and project staff were both effective as well. The peer/near-peer-facilitated programs had a lower success rate—2 of 5 shifted gender norms or attitudes—but the number of studies was too small to suggest that they are less effective. Thus, overall there was no clear pattern linking facilitator type to effectiveness in shifting gender norms and attitudes. Grouped simply as teacher-versus non-teacher-facilitated, teachers accounted for only one of the ineffective programs, and their success rate was comparable to NGO/community delivery and higher than peer/near-peer delivery.

Based on studies reviewed it appears that multiple types of facilitators can be effective. Practically, the choice between schoolteachers and externally hired facilitators involves meaningful trade-offs. Working with teachers in the school system can be strategic in terms of sustainability and scale-up. Teachers also offer institutional legitimacy, existing relationships with students, and have already been trained to work

with students. Yet some of these features can be liabilities: teachers occupy a position of authority and evaluate students, which may inhibit open discussion of sensitive topics. Teachers also have existing responsibilities, including teaching students reading, writing, math, science, history, etc. They may have limited experience facilitating reflective discussion and may hold beliefs about gender roles and traits which may—consciously or not—undermine gender transformative content. NGO-hired facilitators, by contrast, are typically selected and trained specifically in the intervention content and pedagogical methods of a program. They are not embedded in the school's authority structure and do not determine children's grades. However, facilitators' presence is time-limited, and their integration into school systems is dependent on institutional goodwill that may not persist when a program's funding ends. It may be that a hybrid model where external facilitators deliver the initial intervention and build teacher capacity through in-service coaching offers a potential way to capture the benefits of both approaches.

Another question regarding facilitators is whether adult-led or young person/near peer-led facilitators are more effective. Proximity in age is theorized to lower the barrier to discussing sensitive topics and being more relatable, and it represents a way for programs to advance youth participation and leadership. The empirical support for this is mixed and limited. A recent global review of school-based peer education programs aimed at improving health identified 67 papers that reported students' health outcomes. While predominantly from high income countries, about half (52%) showed evidence of effectiveness and 12% had mixed findings (Dodd et al., 2022). From the authors' supplementary table, a subset of studies (11) included a study arm that was peer-led and an arm that was adult or clinician-led and presented results comparing arms. The peer led arm was more effective (4) or had mixed findings (2) in half the studies (Dodd et al., 2022; from authors' supplementary table). The geographic scope of the studies, the focus on health (i.e., substance use, disease prevention, oral health, sex ed, and no studies with violence, education, or gender outcomes), and very few with attitude indicators (mostly health-related norms/attitudes, none were labeled as gender norms or attitudes), limits our ability to extrapolate from these findings for gender and education lessons. A review focused on community-based, peer-facilitated adolescent health programs in LMIC also found mixed

results. Peer-led programs had significant positive effects in zero out of 4 studies for HIV outcomes, 1 out of 9 studies for clinical SRH outcomes, 2 of 3 for violence outcomes, 4 of 7 for mental health outcomes, and 4 of 8 for substance use (Rose-Clarke et al., 2019). Again, while interesting that the peer-led programs seem to perform better for violence, mental health, and substance use programs, these are community-based programs (not school-based), and the review did not examine whether programs led by adults or young adults would perform the same, better, or worse than peers.

At What Age to Engage and With Whom?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Gender norms and attitudes are shiftable regardless of age or sex, though what it takes to shift them may vary and remains under-researched.

Questions that practitioners and policymakers frequently ask, such as whether younger or older adolescents are more responsive to gender norms programming, and whether and how programs work differently for girls versus boys, remain largely unresolved by the current evidence base because most studies don't compare across different age groups.

On age, the included programs spanned a wide range, covering participants as young as 10 and as old as 18, with most programs targeting adolescents aged 12 and above. However, no clear patterns emerged across studies regarding differential program effectiveness by age, and all age groups studied showed evidence of some impact. Among the studies that did not find a program impact on gender norms and attitudes, half (3) were conducted among younger adolescents (around age 12-14), and half (3) were conducted among adolescents older than 14. One study that tracked outcomes separately for two distinct age groups

(Kumar et al., 2021) found no definitive pattern favoring either younger or older participants. Another study (reporting age disaggregation in narrative only, not data tables) found significant effects on views on gender norms, gender attitudes, and self-efficacy among older girls, but not younger girls (Nanda et al., 2017).

On sex, similarly, no consistent patterns emerged either across or within studies to suggest that programs are systematically more or less effective for shifting gender norms and attitudes among girls versus boys as measured by the questions and scales used in these studies. Out of the 18 studies that included females and males in their program, 12 analyzed gender norm or attitude outcomes by sex, with 23 gender norm or attitude indicators (such as the GEM scale) across the 12 studies. Among the 23 gender norm and attitude indicators, 7 indicators were non-significant for both females and males, and 9 indicators were significant for both females and males. Where the outcomes were different for females and males (i.e. significant for one but not the other), for 4 indicators outcomes were significant for girls but not boys, and for 3 indicators outcomes were significant for boys but not girls. Overall for the 12 studies the impact was somewhat greater for girls in four (Achyut et al., 2017-Vietnam; Beckwith et al., 2023; Karmaliani et al., 2020; Sa et al., 2021)—mostly because an indicator was significant for girls but not boys; and somewhat greater for boys in four (Achyut et al., 2017-India; Dhar et al., 2022; Jewkes et al., 2019; Sosa-Rubi et al., 2017)—either because the significant change on a gender norm or attitude indicator for boys was larger than the significant change on that indicator for girls or there was no significant change for girls. The four remaining studies found no real difference by sex in terms of program effects on gender attitudes (Barker et al., 2022; Jin et al., 2021; Kemigisha et al., 2019; Sharrat et al., 2023).

Looking across studies, single-sex programs and programs for females and males combined differed little in their effect on gender norms and attitudes.

Among the 12 programs that were designed for and offered to a single sex (girls only or boys only) 10 (83%) shifted gender norms or attitudes, compared with 14 (78%) of the 18 programs designed for and offered to both females and males. This finding does not mean single sex and combined programs are equivalent. A program's objectives and theory of change may make a single-sex program or a combined program a more appropriate choice.

Gender norms and attitudes appear to be shiftable across the age and sex range represented in these studies. This does not mean age and sex are irrelevant to program design. It may well be, for example, that parental involvement is a critical program component when working with younger adolescents but adds less value when working with older ones, or that specific content domains require different approaches for girls and boys. The current evidence base does not rigorously examine these questions. Disentangling these questions will require studies designed with age- and sex-stratified comparisons as primary analytical objectives. The headline finding, however, is an encouraging one: **gender norms and attitudes are shiftable regardless of adolescents' age or sex**—though what it takes to shift them may vary.

Gender norms shifting programs and education outcomes

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Very limited number of studies that also examined education outcomes.
- There were no programs that had a significant negative effect on education—that is, gender norms shifting programs did not detract from education objectives.
- Only three studies assessed learning outcomes using test scores, grades, or self-assessments, with none finding a significant impact on learning.

Nine of the 30 studies measured one or more education outcomes, including access outcomes such as enrollment, dropout, and attendance, or attitudes towards girls' education or girls' educational aspirations. Results for these outcomes were mixed, with some beneficial and some null effects. Few studies measured the same outcome, so there is not enough evidence to discern any hints of patterns.⁵ Furthermore, the program detail provided in most papers is

insufficient to understand the content and extent of program elements' or multi-component initiatives' education-focused activities.

Despite the very limited evidence base, two points are notable. There were no programs that had a significant negative effect on education—that is, gender norms shifting programs did not detract from education objectives despite many of the interventions being implemented during the school day. Only three studies assessed learning outcomes using test scores, grades, or self-assessments, with none finding a significant impact (Dhar et al., 2022; Edmonds et al., 2023; Karmaliani et al., 2020). More research is needed to understand whether and how shifts to more equitable gender norms and attitudes impact education outcomes. For example, do gender norms shifting programs implemented together with education interventions amplify effects on learning or school progression? And, conversely, whether and how do improvements in learning impact gender norms and attitudes?

⁵ Enrollment, reduced drop out, progression to the next grade, and girls convincing their family about her higher education, were all significantly improved in one of two studies (Verma et al 2024 for enrollment and girls convincing family, Edmonds et al 2023 for dropout and progression). Regular attendance was significantly improved in one out of three studies that measured attendance (sig: Tagat et al 2025; n.s.: Austrian et al 2021, and Karmaliani et al 2020). Attitudes regarding education were improved in three studies (Achyut et al 2011 in both study arms; Pike et al 2023 for 1 of 3 questions; Visser et al 2021 among girls, parents, and teachers). Three studies measured girls' educational aspirations, with one finding significant improvements (sig: Tagat et al 2025; n.s.: Edmonds et al 2023 and Verma et al 2024).

Discussion

Strengthening the Evidence Base and Positioning the Field

This review finds evidence that programs in and with schools can shift gender norms and attitudes among both girls and boys, from early through late adolescence. The 30 studies identified in this review, while a solid foundation, are not a large number, in part because shifting gender norms in and through education as a distinct programmatic area is relatively recent, and in part because our inclusion criteria prioritized quantitative studies with designs that support causal inference, which excluded qualitative studies and pre-post or cross-sectional designs that fall outside that criterion. Compared to other reviews of related topics, 30 studies is on the low end, but in the range of what is common. For example, Keith et al., (2022, for GBV prevention) identified 53 studies in a 20 year publication period; Levy et al., (2020, addressing gender inequity to improve health) identified 59 programs in an 18 year publication period; Mmari et al., (2024, gender transformative interventions to improve health) identified 30 evaluations in a 13 year publication period; and Psaki et al., (2022) identified 9 studies in a

20 year publication period that examined the barrier of gender-insensitive school environments.

While it will continue to grow, the emerging evidence from this review finds the following regarding what approaches seem to matter for success, what does not seem to work, and what we need more research on (see Table 1).

Beyond the encouraging overarching findings about shifting gender norms in and through education, considerable scope remains to expand what is known about what works, how, and for whom. Filling these research gaps, as well as better understanding the impact of gender norms shifting programs, is key to positioning the field. Several priorities for research stand out and are elaborated below:

- Conduct studies with longer term follow-up to assess both sustainability of change over time and the longer term impact on multi-sector outcomes
- Rigorously test and document specific program elements, approaches, and implementation details to inform replication and scale up

Table 1. Overview of program effectiveness

PROMISING		DOES NOT SEEM TO WORK	MORE RESEARCH NEEDED	
Multi-level programming combining components directed at adolescents with activities engaging parents, schools, and/or communities	Participatory, facilitated group approaches that encourage critical reflection among participants	One-off / light touch gender content is usually too small a dose to sufficiently shift gender norms and attitudes	What specific program elements and approaches are driving changes in gender norms and attitudes	Adolescent gender norms and attitudes are shiftable regardless of age or sex—though what it takes to shift them may vary and remains under-researched
			Different types of facilitators can be effective, more research is needed to understand key characteristics and how to best train and support at scale	What interventions work to address the structural biases in school environments that resist and counter gender norms shifting programming

- Measure a wider breadth of outcomes and use consistent validated measures across studies

Longer term follow-up to assess both sustainability of change over time and longer term impact on multi-sector outcomes. The question of durability is almost entirely unresolved. The vast majority of studies conducted their endline assessments not long after the intervention ended. We do not yet know whether more equitable norms and behaviors resulting from gender norms shifting interventions are sustained over the long term. Does change toward more equitable gender norms and attitudes among younger adolescents persist as they mature? Do they translate into more equitable behavioral scripts in adulthood? Under what conditions is it more likely that the shifts are sustained? Follow-up studies that return to participants long after program completion are critically needed to answer these questions. If attitudinal shifts are short-lived, the policy case for investment in these programs is considerably weaker. Conversely, if they are durable, as they were two years out in the study by Dhar and colleagues (2022), the long-term returns to early investment may be substantial.

Longer follow-ups that track adolescents into young adulthood are important for other reasons as well. Gender norms underlie a broad range of health, social, and economic outcomes, many of which become more salient as young people age, such as power and violence in relationships, labor market participation, and final education level attained. Thus, longer follow-up windows may offer not just evidence about the durability of attitudinal change, but also the opportunity to detect causal effects on behavioral and multi-sectoral outcomes. Tracking cohorts of adolescents over time creates opportunities to observe whether and how shifts in gender norms, attitudes and behaviors during school years have ripple effects for young adults and adult health, relationships, employment, and civic/political engagement.

Even at shorter and medium-term follow up, the potential ripple effects of successfully shifting gender norms and attitudes remain under-explored. There were only two studies that looked at whether shifting gender attitudes lead to more equitable behaviors. Shifting adolescents' self-reported attitudes or norms inside a classroom does not inherently lead to more equitable behavior if a patriarchal home or community

environment forbids or sanctions it. Assessing and improving the likelihood that more equitable norms and attitudes lead to more gender equitable behavior change is another important area for future research. While greater gender equity is an intrinsic good, some stakeholders may be more persuaded to invest in this work if its benefits to education (including learning), health, and economic outcomes can be documented. Indeed, many of the included studies examined not just attitudes, but also behavioral and multi-sectoral impacts. However, because different studies had different aims and examined impacts in different sectors, the number of studies per sector shrank, and then shrank further as the indicators chosen to measure change varied quite a bit. For example, only about half (18) studies examined violence-related outcomes, and of these, only one study looked at the impact on corporal punishment in schools. More research is needed that tracks not only whether programs shift gender norms and attitudes, but whether those shifts translate into changes in gendered behavior and/or into improvements in health, education, and economic outcomes for adolescents.

Rigorously test and document specific program elements, approaches, and implementation details to inform replication and scale up. Causal studies that isolate and compare specific program elements remain a critical gap in the literature. Only a handful of the studies in this review were designed to tease out the effects of different program elements or variations and how they compared. Those studies that did so suggest that multi-level programs tend to be more effective than single-level programs. While the available evidence points toward greater effectiveness for programs that engage not just students but also parents, teachers, and the broader school environment, rigorous direct evidence on this question is thin. In one study, where activities with individual students also increased across arms, it is not clear whether the better outcomes in the high intensity intervention arm were due to the multi-level approach or to students' longer exposure to the intervention. And in two studies, the level that was added in the second treatment arm was the participatory work with students in groups—i.e., the group activities were the added element and performed better than school-wide activities alone. Future research should prioritize designs that can isolate the added value of multi-level approaches, and explore unanswered implementation questions for multi-level program design, including how

to shift norms among the adults who shape school culture? What if the level of ecosystem engaged is the government and policymakers? How much program time is needed with parents and with teachers? Does the critical level(s) (parents, schools, etc.) to include depend on adolescents' age or sex? Are certain school-wide activities essential (or not)? Could multi-level approaches contribute to more sustained change over time?

Also important for replication and scale-up in school settings is assessing the program approaches that can effectively address the structural biases in school environments that resist and counter gender norms shifting programming—such as gender-segregated spaces, subject segregation, failure to address sexual harassment and violence, gendered staffing hierarchy, and systemic teacher biases.

More confirmatory evidence at scale is needed on other program elements and characteristics. This review found that studies that were not effective at shifting gender norms or attitudes tended to have relatively less gender content, suggesting that dose matters and simply adding a small amount of gender content is insufficient for attitude change. However, direct evidence comparing varying program duration or content is lacking. One study that compared different curricula alone and in combination found greater impact on gender attitudes in the combined arm but it is not clear whether it was the combination of content or the longer time adolescents spent in the program that made the difference. Future studies can control for this by building in time-equivalent exposure (see for example, Mensch et al 2021). Other questions for future study include: Are there important synergies—for example, between gender equitable attitudes and agency—that produce greater impact on multi-sectoral outcomes than either would on its own?

No studies explicitly teased apart different facilitators or facilitator characteristics, such as age (e.g., peer vs. adult) or whether any individual characteristics were as important as facilitator skill/ enthusiasm. Looking across studies, both teachers and NGO-hired facilitators were part of successful programs. Does the sex or age of facilitator matter more for girls or boys or not at all? Does a hybrid model where external facilitators run initial sessions and provide teachers with in-service coaching and support for an initial period leverage the benefits of both? What are scalable training

approaches for teachers that deliver better outcomes at the level of the student?⁶ How can programs engage and support teachers to model gender equitable attitudes?

Along these lines, some programs introduced additional content components, such as learning materials or other activities, but these components' contribution to the impact of the program was rarely directly measured, nor was their performance directly compared to alternatives. We don't know which are better, essential, how often they should be implemented, or how long they should be. These questions are important for cost-effectiveness, opportunity costs, replication, and scaling.

Measure a wider breadth of outcomes and use consistent validated measures across studies.

A strength of these studies is that most of them examined outcomes across sectors. Yet we are just starting to scratch the surface. As noted above, we do not have long-term follow up, which is when some of these outcomes, such as educational attainment and grade progression, SRH, experience/perpetration of IPV, or livelihoods outcomes may surface or settle at a prevalence that allows for change to be more detectable. Only a few of the studies fielded endline surveys beyond a few months post-intervention. Furthermore, different studies are often measuring different outcomes that are not directly comparable, possibly obscuring patterns. And some key outcomes of interest, such as learning and critical thinking, are largely missing from the measured effects, so there is no way to see whether and how gender norms shifting programs may contribute to learning or act synergistically with critical thinking to improve health, economic, social and leadership outcomes.

Finally, there may be patterns and lessons we are missing because of how gender norms and attitudes were measured. First, there is the issue of social desirability bias of self-reporting. This can be an issue especially immediately after an intervention, when adolescents have been taught what the "correct" answer is. Indeed, Barker and colleagues (2022) found substantial discrepancy between the percent of boys reporting that they helped their sister with

⁶ See the ALIGN platform for forthcoming module on gender-transformative education and strengthening teacher education (both pre and in service) for gender equality.

chores, versus the percent of girls reporting that their brothers helped them. In their second endline, Dhar and colleagues added objective measures of behavior—a revealed preference measure of whether girls submitted a college scholarship application and another which tracked whether girls and boys signed a public petition to end dowry (Dhar et al 2022). Incorporating objective, verified, or observed behavioral metrics could strengthen future study conclusions.

Furthermore, gender norms and attitudes were not measured consistently across studies. The included studies drew on a wide range of instruments, scales, and items, including beliefs about differential treatment of boys and girls, gender stereotypes, views on gender norms, attitudes about gender roles and behaviors, etc. This heterogeneity limits comparability. Apparent differences in effectiveness across studies may partly reflect what and how attitudes were measured rather than true differences in program impact. Within studies, differences between subgroups may stem from measures that better reflected attitudes that changed for girls but missed those that changed for boys, or vice versa. **Greater use of common, validated measures of adolescent gender norms and attitudes would strengthen comparability across studies and inform understanding well beyond the gender and education space, illuminating how gender norms shape outcomes in sectors such as health, livelihoods, and gender-based violence.** A shared measurement language would also allow researchers to trace whether the attitude shifts achieved in and through education carry over into these sectors, reinforcing gender norms as a cross-cutting determinant of adolescent wellbeing. The work of the ShiftEd Alliance on such a tool will be an important contribution.

Limitations

The limitations of this review are in large part a product of its rapid-review design and should be interpreted in that context. Several deserve specific mention.

First, the review was restricted to studies published in English. This is a common but consequential constraint. It likely explains the underrepresentation of Latin America in the included studies, with only a single study from Mexico meeting inclusion criteria despite a substantial body of programmatic activity in the

region. Spanish- and Portuguese-language evaluations of gender norms shifting programs in schools in Latin America may exist but were not captured by this search. That said, a recent review by Marcus and colleagues (2024) included searches in French, Spanish, and Portuguese but found few evaluations from Latin America and the Caribbean, possibly reflecting the more limited volume of externally funded activities, which are more likely to include funding for evaluations (Marcus, personal communication, June 24, 2026).

Second, with only a single reviewer screening titles and abstracts, the risk of inadvertently missing eligible studies is higher than in a full systematic review, where two independent reviewers screen in parallel and discrepancies are discussed. Several steps were taken to mitigate this risk, including reviews of bibliographies from other relevant systematic reviews, use of Covidence's machine-learning assisted screening, and CoPilot and Excel assistance in managing and cross-checking records. Nonetheless, the risk of missed studies cannot be ruled out.

Third, our definition of effectiveness was relatively lenient: a program was classified as effective if it showed a statistically significant improvement ($p < 0.05$) in at least one gender norm or gender attitude outcome. Because programs measuring more outcomes had more opportunities to register a significant result, and because a single significant finding was sufficient for an effective classification, this criterion may overcount effectiveness relative to a stricter threshold.

Fourth, there is a substantial body of qualitative grey literature on programs and interventions that fell short of this review's inclusion criteria, but which may nonetheless speak to some of the questions raised in this review.

Finally, we note that the information presented in the reviewed papers about specific intervention content was limited. While there was sufficient detail to characterize the general programmatic approach, this review does not constitute a content analysis of the underlying curricula, and conclusions about content should be interpreted accordingly.

Conclusion

The evidence reviewed here delivers a clear and encouraging message for practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and funders committed to gender transformative approaches in education: school-based programs that address gender norms can and do shift adolescent gender norms and attitudes across ages and for girls and for boys. With 24 of 30 rigorously evaluated programs producing significant effects, and with the pace of high-quality evaluation accelerating markedly over the past five years, the field has moved decisively beyond proof-of-concept.

Schools are a uniquely powerful delivery platform, offering scale, sustained access to adolescents within their existing peer networks, and a site where the gendered scripts that shape life outcomes are actively produced and can be actively contested. Programs that make shifting gender norms and attitudes a robust part of their content, and reach beyond individual students to engage families, teachers, and school communities show promise.

At the same time, this review underscores how much remains to be learned. Critical questions remain underexplored, including about the durability of norm and attitude change; the longer term and multisectoral effects on education (including learning), health, economic, and political representation outcomes; what program elements implemented by whom and how are most effective; and how best to address schools' systemic barriers to gender norms shifting and related work.

These gaps represent both a research agenda and a design challenge. The field needs evaluations designed and powered to move beyond asking whether programs work to asking how, for whom, and with what lasting effect. We also need measurement tools that facilitate comparisons and learning across studies and settings. Shifting gender norms in and through education may be an important mechanism for ensuring that education delivers on its promise, but we won't know unless we measure it.

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Appendix

Appendix Table 1: Included studies and programs

Citation	Program Name	Location	Adol target age and sex	Program Duration	Program Dose (# and hrs/session)
Achyut et al., 2011	GEMS (Gender Equity Movement in Schools)	India (Mumbai)	females & males 12-14	2 years	Group education Y1: 10 sessions over 6 months; Y2: 15 sessions over 7 months [~45 min per session]. School campaign was a week long series of events
Achyut et al., 2017-India	GEMS (Gender Equity Movement in Schools)	India (Jharkhand)	females & males 12-14	2 years	7 modules and 22 sessions, each session 45 minutes (Y1-10 sessions; Y2-12 sessions)
Achyut et al., 2017-Vietnam	GEMS (Gender Equity Movement in Schools)	Vietnam (Da Nang)	females & males 12-14	2 years	7 modules and 22 sessions, each session 45 minutes (Y1-10 sessions; Y2-12 sessions)
Austrian et al., 2021	Nia Project	Kenya (Kilifi County)	females avg age 14.8	17 months (June 2017 - Oct 2018)	25 sessions, during weekly girls-only health clubs in 2017, and bi-monthly health clubs in 2018
Barker et al., 2022 Beckwith et al., 2023 Hunersen et al., 2023 Gayles et al., 2023	Growing Up GREAT! (GUG) project	DRC (Kinshasa)	females and males 10-14 avg age in study is about 12	9-10 months for classroom and club sessions	26 youth-led, teacher-led, and educator-led sessions. School-based activities include 25 weekly meetings of school clubs and teacher-led classroom lessons
Cherewick et al., 2021	Discover Learning	Tanzania (Dar es Salaam)	females & males ages 10-11	6 weeks	varied by arm: A) six 2-hour sessions once per week B) six 2-hour sessions once per week C) 18 2-hour sessions three times per week
Dhar et al., 2022	Taaron ki Toli (Legion of Stars)	India (Haryana)	females & males avg ~12 years old at baseline	2.5 school years	45-minute session held every three weeks
Edmonds et al., 2023	Girls' Education Program (GEP)	India (Rajasthan)	Females, age 11 at start of program	Designed to last 7 years (grades 6-12), but evaluation conducted after 2 years	32 life skills classes (16 in Grade 6, 16 in Grade 7), 1-hour duration; plus 24 (2x/month) small-group mentoring sessions
Gandara [nd]	Girls' Education Program (GEP)	Cambodia	girls (avg age in study 13 at baseline, 15 endline)	3 years	n/a
Hartmann et al., 2025	No Means No (NMN)	South Africa (Gqeberha)	in study: girls, avg 14 years	Over 1 to 5 weeks	8 hours total delivered in 1-2 hour sessions
Jewkes et al., 2019	Skhokho	South Africa	females and males: 12-15 years	2 years [?]	~21 hours LO curriculum
Jin et al., 2021	You and Me	China (Longnan, Gansu Province)	in study: mean age ~12.8	2 months	eight 45-min sessions 1/week
Karmaliani et al., 2020	Positive Child and Youth Development Programme (also called Red Ball Child Play)	Pakistan (Hyderabad)	in study: 12-14 years	2 years	120 sessions were conducted in each class, with, on average, two sessions of 35 minutes per week, resulting in 60 sessions in a year
Keller et al., 2017	"Your Moment of Truth" (YMOT) intervention	Kenya (Nairobi)	in study: boys ages 15 to 22	6 weeks	six 2-hour sessions, held weekly, plus 2-hour refresher courses were held at 4.5 and 9 months postintervention

Citation	Program Name	Location	Adol target age and sex	Program Duration	Program Dose (# and hrs/session)
Kemigisha et al., 2019	CSE program (no name, developed for site/study)	Uganda (Mbarara district)	girls and boys	9 months	11 lessons, 1-2 hours each
Kumar et al., 2021	Plan-It Girls	India (Delhi and Jharkhand)	girls 14-17	2 academic years	not specified
Leventhal et al., 2016	Girls First Program	India (Bihar)	girls, avg age 13	[longer for RC+HC arm]	RC = 23 weekly sessions; HC = 21 weekly sessions
Lewis-Smith et al., 2025	Body image comic books	India (Rajasthan)	girls and boys, age 11-14	no info [but 6 lessons, so short]	1 comic per 45 min lesson; 6 lessons in total
Miller et al., 2014	Parivartan [in US: called Coaching Boys Into Men]	India (Mumbai)	male cricket athletes aged 10 to 16 years	4 months	one card (about 45-60 minutes each) per week for 12 cards
Nanda et al., 2017	PAGE (Planning Ahead for Girls' Empowerment and Employability)	India (Delhi)	girls ages 15-17	14 months	27 sessions of 45 minutes each
Pike et al 2023	SKILLZ,	South Africa (Cape Town)	females 14-17	approx 6 months (2 school terms)	Sessions lasted 45–60 min and were held weekly during the school term
Pinandari et al., 2023 Beckwith et al., 2023 Hunersen et al., 2023	SETARA (Semangat Dunia Remaja or Teen Aspirations)	Indonesia (Bandar Lampung, Semarang, Denpasar)	females & males 12-15 (avg age in study ~12)	2 years	covering a total of 23 chapters with 45 topics
Sa et al., 2021	Empowerment CSE	China (Lanzhou)	females and males age 13–18 years	7 months	12 45-min sessions
Sharratt et al., 2023	Peace	Uganda (Kampala)	females and males age 14-18	5 days	one chapter of the game was played each day for a duration of 45–60 minutes
Sosa-Rubi et al., 2017	"Amor... pero del Bueno" (True Love)	Mexico (Mexico City)	females and males avg age ~16	16 weeks (beginning in the spring semester and ending early in the following fall semester)	four modules of four sessions each, implemented over 1-h sessions during the afternoon every week, for 16 weeks.
Tagat et al., 2025	Childhood to Livelihood (C2L) program,	India (multiple sites)	females and males ages 10-17	3 years	weekly sessions (timing and duration unavailable)
Thapa et al., 2024	TIPSH Integrative Experiential Learning Intervention Package	Nepal	females and males	four consecutive days	total of 24 hours, averaging six hours per day
Todesco et al., 2023	Journey4Life (J4L)	Indonesia (Jakarta)	females and males 16-17 years old	3-4 months	10 sessions of 90 min
Verma et al., 2024	UMANG	India (Jharkhand)	girls age 15-18	3 years	n/a
Visser et al., 2021	A GEC project	Ethiopia (rural Wolaita, SNNPRS)	girls 10-17 (avg age in eval 13)	3 years	n/a

Appendix Table 2: Program effects on gender attitudes, norms, behavior/experiences

Citation	Program Name	Outcomes - gender attitudes and norms	Outcomes - gendered behavior / experience
Achyut et al., 2011	GEMS (Gender Equity Movement in Schools)	<i>GEM Scale</i> GEA+campaign (vs control) OR 4.2 (p<0.05) Campaign only (vs control) OR 2.1 (p<0.05)	not examined
Achyut et al., 2017-India	GEMS (Gender Equity Movement in Schools)	<i>Gender attitudes score</i> All students: Adj DiD 3.0 (p≤0.05) Girls: Adj DiD 2.3 (ns) Boys: Adj DiD 3.8 (p<0.05) When examined by session exposure, all increased but only longest was sig (0-10 sessions ns; 11-15 sessions ns; 16-25 sessions p<0.05)	not examined
Achyut et al., 2017-Vietnam	GEMS (Gender Equity Movement in Schools)	<i>Mean gender attitudinal score</i> Girls: Adj. DiD 1.6 (p≤0.05) Boys: Adj DiD 1.3 (ns)	not examined
Austrian et al., 2021	Nia Project	<i>Gender norms in marriage</i> ns for any of 3 treatment arms <i>Equitable adolescent gender norms</i> Pads only: ns RH only: Coef 0.45 (p=0.003) Pads+RH: Coef 0.57 (p<0.001) <i>Gendered sexual norms</i> Pads only: ns RH only: Coef 0.46 (p<0.001) Pads+RH: Coef 0.36 (p=0.001)	not examined
Barker et al., 2022 Beckwith et al., 2023 Hunersen et al., 2023 Gayles et al., 2023	Growing Up GREAT! (GUG) project	<i>Gender-equitable chore-sharing attitudes</i> All: OR 2.28 (p<0.001) Girls: OR 2.43 (p<0.001) Boys: OR 2.14 (p<0.001) <i>Sexual double standard scale</i> ns for all; ns for girls, ns for boys <i>Gender stereotypical traits</i> ns for all; ns for girls Boys 0.10, p<0.05 <i>Gender stereotypical roles</i> ns for all; ns for girls, ns for boys <i>It is okay to tease a girl who acts like a boy</i> ns for all; ns for girls, ns for boys <i>It is okay to tease a boy who acts like a girl</i> ns for all; ns for girls, ns for boys <i>Attitudes toward sexual activity scale</i> ns for all; ns for girls, ns for boys	<i>Chore sharing</i> No significant effect of intervention on chore sharing. Significant effect of gender equitable attitudes on chore sharing. Compared to boys and girls, respectively, who retained or adopted gender-inequitable attitudes between waves: Boys who retained or adopted gender-equitable attitudes from Wave 1 to Wave 2, were 1.9 (p<0.001) times more likely to help their sisters with chores Girls who retained or adopted gender-equitable attitudes between waves were 1.5 (p=0.005) times more likely to have received help from their brothers with chores.
Cherewick et al., 2021	Discover Learning	<i>Gender norms, beliefs and behaviors</i> (13 items) Arm B-medium level treatment (vs Arm A-low level treatment): Effect size 0.40 (p<0.001) Arm C-highest treatment (vs Arm A-low level treatment): Effect size 1.03 (p<0.001)	not examined

Citation	Program Name	Outcomes - gender attitudes and norms	Outcomes - gendered behavior / experience
Dhar et al., 2022	Taaron ki Toli (Legion of Stars)	<i>Gender attitude index</i> 1st endline: 0.18 (p < 0.001). No sig difference between girls and boys. 2nd endline: 0.16 (p < 0.001). Effect on boys is significantly greater than effect on girls.	<i>Self-reported gendered behavior index</i> (e.g., supportive of sisters' career aspirations, gender-equitable chore behavior) 1st endline: 0.20 (p < 0.001). When disaggregated by sex, sig bigger impact for boys (vs girls) 2nd endline: 0.23 (p<0.001). When disaggregated by sex, sig bigger impact for boys (vs girls) <i>Applied to college scholarship</i> (Endline 2 only) Asked of girls only: ns <i>Signed public petition to end dowry system</i> (Endline 2 only) Ns for girls, boys, and girls & boys combined
Edmonds et al., 2023	Girls' Education Program (GEP)	<i>Perception of gender norms index</i> 0.09 standard deviations (p<0.001)	not examined
Gandara [nd]	Girls' Education Program (GEP)	<i>Gender knowledge and attitudes score</i> DiD 0.76 (p < 0.001)	not examined
Hartmann et al., 2025	No Means No (NMN)	<i>Gender norms and attitudes scale</i> All: ns; Girls-only arm: ns; Girls & boys arm: ns <i>Victim blaming attitudes</i> All: ns; Girls-only arm: ns; Girls & boys arm: ns	not examined
Jewkes et al., 2019	Skhokho	<i>Gender attitudes score</i> Girls: ns for school arm; ns for school + family arm Boys: school arm EMD = 0.82 (p=0.007); ns for school + family arm	not examined
Jin et al., 2021	You and Me	<i>Attitudes toward gender equity</i> 2 nd follow-up: ns. No significant differences between girls and boys.	not examined
Karmaliani et al., 2020	Positive Child and Youth Development Programme (also called Red Ball Child Play)	<i>Gender attitudes, roles and norms</i> (13 items, low=good) Girls: EMD -1.32 (p<0.001) Boys: EMD -0.65 (p<0.05) Reduction in scores greater for girls than boys.	not examined
Keller et al., 2017	"Your Moment of Truth" (YMOT) intervention	<i>Positive women composite score</i> (attitudes toward women and myths about sexual assault) Intervention group: Effect size 1.61 (p<0.001) Comparison group: Effect size -0.23 (p<0.01) (large effect size for the PWC difference in YMOT group, and a small, negative effect size in the comparison group)	not examined
Kemigisha et al., 2019	CSE program (no name, developed for site/study)	<i>Gender equitable norms score</i> All: ns; girls: ns; boys: ns	not examined
Kumar et al., 2021	Plan-It Girls	<i>Gender attitude scale</i> (use GEMS from Achyut 2016) Delhi Grade 9: Adjusted DiD 4.59 (p<0.05) Delhi Grade 11: Adjusted DiD 2.73 (p<0.1) Jharkhand Grade 9: ns Jharkhand Grade 11: ns	not examined
Leventhal et al., 2016	Girls First Program	<i>Gender equality attitudes</i> Health Curriculum (HC): ns Resilience Curriculum (RC): DiD coefficient 1.2 (p<0.025) RC + HC: DiD coefficient 4.62 (p<0.001)	not examined

Citation	Program Name	Outcomes - gender attitudes and norms	Outcomes - gendered behavior / experience
Lewis-Smith et al., 2025	Body image comic books	<i>Gender stereotypes endorsement</i> Post-intervention: partial eta-squared effect size 0.002 (p=0.035) Follow-up: partial eta-squared effect size 0.006 (p<0.001)	not examined
Miller et al., 2014	Parivartan [in US: called Coaching Boys Into Men]	<i>Gender equitable attitudes</i> Adjusted mean difference 0.28 (p=0.001)	not examined
Nanda et al., 2017	PAGE (Planning Ahead for Girls' Empowerment and Employability)	<i>GEM (Gender Equitable Men) scale</i> Adjusted DiD 1.99 (p=0.000)	not examined
Pike et al., 2023	SKILLZ,	<i>Gender norms and expectations</i> Not significant	not examined
Pinandari et al., 2023 Beckwith et al., 2023 Hunersen et al., 2023	SETARA (Semangat Dunia Remaja or Teen Aspirations)	<i>Attitudes re: gender equality in chores</i> ns for girls and for boys in all 3 sites <i>Sexual double standard scale</i> ns for all; ns for girls in 2 sites, sig (-0.29, p<0.001) in 1 site; ns for boys in all 3 sites <i>Gender stereotypical traits</i> All: sig reduction DiD coeff -0.12 (p<0.001) Girls: sig reduction in all 3 sites -0.15 to -0.22 depending on site Boys: ns in all 3 sites <i>Gender stereotypical roles</i> All: DiD coeff -0.13 (p<0.01) Girls: sig reduction in 2 of 3 sites -0.29 (p<0.01); -0.23 (p<0.01); ns in 3rd Boys: sig reduction in 1 of 3 sites (-0.28 p<0.05 in P); sig increase in 1 site; ns in other <i>Agree w gender-atypical teasing</i> All: ns <i>It is okay to tease a girl who acts like a boy</i> ns for all sites for girls and for boys <i>It is okay to tease a boy who acts like a girl</i> ns for all sites for girls and for boys <i>Attitudes toward sexual activity scale</i> (e.g. Men are always ready for sex) gender breakdown by site, sex, and by (4) questions has only 2 reductions (out of 24) that are sig and 1 sig increase	not examined
Sa et al., 2021	Empowerment CSE	<i>Nontraditional gender role attitudes</i> Partial eta-squared 0.007 (p=0.004) <i>Rejection of Sexual double standard</i> Partial eta-squared 0.02 (p<0.001)	not examined
Sharratt et al., 2023	Peace	Attitudes towards gender inequalities No significant effect	not examined
Sosa-Rubi et al., 2017	"Amor... pero del Bueno" (True Love)	<i>Acceptance of sexist attitudes</i> All: ns; ns for females; ns for males <i>Acceptance of sexist attitudes in dating</i> All: -0.10 (p<0.001) Females: -0.07 (p<0.001) Males: -0.09 (p<0.05)	not examined
Tagat et al., 2025	Childhood to Livelihood (C2L) program,	<i>Gender attitudes</i> 0.45 (p<0.05)	not examined

Citation	Program Name	Outcomes - gender attitudes and norms	Outcomes - gendered behavior / experience
Thapa et al., 2024	TIPSH Integrative Experiential Learning Intervention Package	<i>Knowledge of gender norms</i> 1.43 (p <0.0001) <i>Attitude about gender discrimination and sexual harassment</i> 0.95 (p <0.0001)	not examined
Todesco et al., 2023	Journey4Life (J4L)	<i>Gender equality attitudes</i> Not significant	not examined
Verma et al., 2024	UMANG	<i>Gender attitude index</i> All girls in intervention area: Adjusted DiD 1.487** Girls exposed in intervention area: Adjusted DiD 2.049** **not defined in paper but at least p-value of 0.05 or less	not examined
Visser et al., 2021	A GEC project	<i>Attitudes towards girls' ed</i> 1.6 (p<0.001) <i>Perception of community gender roles</i> 1.2 (p<0.001)	not examined