

# **SOCIO – ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION IN GUSHEGU/KARAGA DISTRICT OF THE NORTHERN REGION OF GHANA.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Disparities in education remain global although between 1970 and 1990 considerable progress was made to narrow gaps. Ghana has made progress towards achieving equal access to education overall but is a long way from achieving gender equality. The situation is worse in northern Ghana where girls enrolment and completion rates are far lower than the national average. Studies show that the Northern Region records the lowest gender parity rates in education. This paper examines the factors and forces militating against girls' education in the Gushegu-Karaga District with the view to making proposals for improving the situation. Secondary and primary data were collected from various sources for the analysis including a survey and existing documentation. The study reveals that poverty, low parental income, low parental level of education, early marriage, boy child preference, religious practices, household chores, child betrothal, child fosterage and polygyny as factors impeding girls' education. These factors were found to further impede girls' progress socio-economically. This situation creates the need for intense educational campaigns, sex education, vocational education, bye laws, affirmative action policies and school management committees to tackle the challenges in order to help reduce and eventually eliminate the socio-economic and cultural impediments and promote girls' progress.*

**KEY DESCRIPTORS:** Gender Parity, Socio-economic determinants, Household, Girl Child Education, Cultural factors.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Girl child education is a significant contributory factor to economic development and a key to sustainable development. In an era of globalisation, the education of the girl child is considered a strategic investment in human and intellectual capital. However, the contextual realities for girl children and the state of their education in Africa are daunting. In sub-Saharan Africa, illiteracy among women continues to be high due to the inability of the countries to enrol and retain girl children in schools (UNESCO, 1993). At the Pan African Conference on the Education of the Girl Child in Ouagadougou in 1993, it was noted that the illiteracy rate for women was over 60% and that there were about 26 million African girls out of school; most of them in the rural areas. This was to increase to 36 million by the year 2000, and double by 2010, if left unchecked. No policy exists that debars girls from either enrolling in school or pursuing higher education. Comparatively, fewer girls than boys are admitted to the primary one each year and only few remain to pursue higher education in spite of the place of education in socio-economic progress and wellbeing improvement.

Education is a vehicle for obtaining knowledge, skills and attitudes for work, home and personhood. For women, a good education makes them better mothers and homemakers, productive workers and responsible citizens. In the study on the productivity of men and women farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, Acharya and Bennett (1983) found that the gain in productivity from education was higher for women than for men (62% and 38% respectively). Studies on the determinants of wage earnings have found the marginal effects of education to be the same for women and men, when labour force participation, work experience and sector employment are taken into account. However, discriminatory practices against women limit their work opportunities and reduce the expected earnings and gains from education (Acharya and Bennett, 1983). Acharya and Bennett also found that women with more compared to those with less education are generally better paid and more likely to find employment in the public sector. Married women are more likely to withdraw from the labour market as their schooling increases from primary to the secondary level, but withdrawal from the labour force by married women is also due partly to the fact that education increases women's productivity in non market activities.

According to Anderson (1988) education enhances women's ability to exercise their rights and responsibilities. The right to own land, for example, is diminished by the inability to read and understand contracts or to do simple arithmetic. The right to vote is meaningless unless women can inform themselves of the issues of the day. Anderson argues also that violence against women in the home or on the streets has been associated not just with poverty but also with illiteracy, which prevents women from asserting their rights and protecting themselves by seeking due process of law.

Summers (1993) notes that the education of girls offers hope for breaking the cycle of feminized deprivation and poverty. According to Summers increased schooling has similar effects on the incomes of both males and females but the girls education generates much larger social benefits. He attributes this to incomes earned, leverage afforded and knowledge and awareness on girl-child education.

Kwesiga (2002) explains that educated women contribute to the well being of themselves, their families, communities and countries. They serve as resources for the promotion of the social, mental and physical wellbeing of themselves, their families and communities.

Dolphyne (1991) corroborates Kwesiga by arguing that the importance of education to the emancipation of women cannot be over emphasized. In fact it is ignorance that has made women accept the inferior position in society for centuries and education is the only the weapon for breaking the barriers to emancipation. Like Kwesiga, she attributes women's subordination to illiteracy.

Dolphyne (1991) further argues that spurious beliefs about women's subordinate position are based on cultural and religious concepts that cannot stand up to close scrutiny. As well, she point out that misconceptions about women's physiology and intelligence have made women to accept unquestioningly male superiority. She explains that such beliefs and misconceptions have made women feel generally inadequate and incapable of functioning effectively in the society. Dolphyne maintains that it is only through the education of women that they can develop the analytical and critical minds that will make them question the religious, cultural and physiological bases of their supposed inferiority. Only education can give women knowledge that would expose the myths and fallacies behind the cultural practices that keep them in subordination. This clearly shows that without girls' education the emancipation of Ghanaian women will take several more centuries.

In spite of the general awareness of the importance of girl child education many African countries have no well-formulated national policies, which aim at improving girl child education.

It is important to state at this point that since the 1950s successive governments of Ghana have tried to improve female participation in the national issues via education. Recent to improve women participation in development is the creation of the Ministry for Women and Children Affairs (MWCA). Before then the Girls Education Unit was created to enhance educational equity. This has led to the drawing up of policies in all sectors of the economy for the progress of women. Consequently, initiatives have been embarked upon to the target to achieve universal basic education and 50% enrolment of girls in the national universities. These have included the creation of at least one girls senior secondary school in each district of the country, the implementation of the Ghana School Feeding Programme and Capitation Grant initiative and Free Compulsory Basic Education project (MOE, 2005).

Analyses of the Ghana Education Service (GES) Report (2005) indicates that GES is much interested in the high enrolment in the basic schools but silent on the retention and sustainability of these laudable programs (GES 2005). Also, in spite the ongoing efforts lots of girls are still out of the classrooms and gender parity remains a far cry nationally and especially so northern Ghana (GES 2008). What accounts for these persistent imbalances? Are all these efforts of the government misdirected or are they worth the while? Of course, the ongoing efforts are necessary but are they sufficient? What are the impediments and how might they be overcome? This paper explores these questions through a case study of the Gushiegu-Karaga District of the Northern Region of Ghana.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study targets parents with female children and opinion leaders. Multi Stage sampling technique was adopted to select participants. According to Kish (1967 cited in Twumasi, 2001), when individual selection of elements seems to be expensive the research can be facilitated by using Cluster multi-stage technique. In this case purposive, accidental and simple random sampling techniques were used. Babbie (1995) noted that non-probability sampling techniques are useful so far as the researcher knows the area and also is aware of the objectives of his study. It is therefore useful especially when the researcher wants to gain preliminary knowledge of the area of the study. In all, 150 households in Gushiegu/Karaga district in 2005 were visited and interviewed. Group discussion for both men and women were organised and observations were also used to support the analysis for this paper. The communities visited were Gushiegu (40), Nabule (25) Zantil (25) Kpugi (20) Karaga (40). The research instruments used were semi-structured interview schedule, interview guide and discussion guide.

Data were also collected through secondary sources from governmental organizations such Ghana Education Service, Ministry of Education and Ghana Statistical Service and non-governmental organizations such as Action Aid, Ibis, CRS, Equal, and Rains/Camfed. The data were then organised in categories and themes and the various variables were evaluated examined and analysed bringing out the usefulness or otherwise. Percentages and tables in some cases were used to explain the relationships between variables or otherwise. The quantitative data were coded edited and analysed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the results were used to support the qualitative data.

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF GIRLS' EDUCATION**

### **Socio-demographic Characteristics**

The demographic characteristics of the respondents included sex, occupation, age, religion, marital status, level of education. It was found that patriarchy played an important role in determining social structures and organizations in the Gushegu-Karaga District and for that matter among the Dagomba of Northern Region. Men are the heads of their families and they take every decision. The people are also patrilineal. Male children inherit family wealth and property. On the death of a father his eldest son takes over the mantle of leadership of the household. It was evident from the data that female household heads were almost non-existent in the communities of the district. The training of girls is toward to filling of subordinate roles. A few women were interviewed in the households visited. This was only because their husbands or senior sons were not home.

It is also important to note that girls in this part of the country are not treated the same as boys. They go through a different socialization process from boys. They are trained to take up the trade of their mothers and on how to handle their future husbands. Their future carriers are linked to the socialization they get from infancy. This is often more or less vocational training and even when girls get into school, men end up taking decisions for them as heads of the household (Fayorsey, 1995).

### **Marriage**

Eighty-five percent (85%) of the respondents were married and 15% had experienced some form of marriage; divorced, widowed and/or separated. The study revealed that the people cherished marriage to the extent that some withdraw their daughters for school for the purposes of marriage. The study revealed that some girls in the district get married and continue their education and depending on the family in which the girl is coming from, they might marry as early as 16 years, this long before the legal age of 18 years. It can therefore be said that parents in the district now allow their daughters to marry at will and there is no specific age for marriage whether early or late marriage.

Junge (1988) indicates that actions including marriage compete with school for older girls. According to him, the age at which females marry, makes marriage an important institution. He again confirmed that enrolment of married students is common. He cites schools in sub Saharan African where married students are enrolled.

### **Islam**

The study revealed that Islam is part of the culture of the people hence their social activities are virtually Islamic activities. The extent of integration is so deep that it is almost impossible to distinguish between cultural and Islamic activities.

The decision to send the girl-child to school or withdraw her from school depends on her parents understanding of what the Quran and the Holy Prophet Mohammed say about the position of the girl-child in Islam. Yet according to the Chief Imam of the area *"the rules of Islam play an important role in determining the behaviour of a Muslim girl in the Society. The refusal of some moslems to send their girls to school cannot be blamed on Islam it can only be attributed to irresponsible parenthood." The prophet said "Seek Knowledge even if it is in China." (Chief Imam)*

Robertson (1986) notes Islam does not discourage girls education. He uses Northern Sudan as an example of an Islamic region where there are high school enrolment rates and even

higher than the Christian South. However, Reis (1986) contradicts this with the view that within Islamic culture certain attitudes and perceptions inhibit girl child education. The concern of Muslims for modesty and safety of girls and women and the desire to guide their honour through veiling and limitations imposed on the private and public roles of Muslim girls all inhibit their effective participation in education. However, Robertson (1986) maintains that these practices are to some extent are Arabic rather than Islamic practices.

### **Level of Parents Education**

There is a strong relationship between the level of parents' education and the number of girls in school. The positive relationship indicates that the higher the level of parental education, the higher the number of their girls in school. Level of parental education also determines the success rates of girl-child education in the District. Once the parents are educated, they make sure that their girls acquire the necessary educational qualifications in and for the future. The coefficient determination showed that only 93% of the variation between level of parental education and the number of children in school could be explained. The rest, seven percent (7%), of the variation could not be explained by the data. This finding is supported by a study conducted by Stuart (1981), which revealed that in Jordan, the level of education attained by fathers was systematically associated with the schooling of daughters thus establishing a positive relationship between fathers' and daughters' education.

Assie (1983) explains that a girl in Cote d, Ivoire with a university graduate father of more than thirty times, compared to one without) is more likely to enter an academic secondary school. This confirms that the finding is applies to northern part of Ghana as found in the study.

### **Number of Children**

There is a positive relationship between the number of children parents have and the number of girls in school. The relationship explains that when the number of children of parents increases in the Region, the number of girls who will be in school will also increase. However, the smaller number of children of parents, the smaller the number of girls who will be in school. It further indicates that the number of children a parent has determines the number of girls who will go to school. The coefficient of determination explains the variation between the number of children parents have and the number girls in school. Only 18.1% cannot be explained and this can be attributed to extraneous factors.

### **Pregnancy**

Pregnancy was an issue that came up in the discussion as one of the social factors that determines the success or failure of the girl child in education. The girl child becomes successful in education if she does not become pregnant in the course of education, holding the other variables constant. The moment she becomes pregnant it terminates her education especially if her parents are very poor.

The study revealed that some of the girls feel that the money given to them by their parents are not sufficient so they rely on boys who come from rich families for more which sometimes lead to pregnancy. Some teachers in the districts take advantage of teaching the girls and finally impregnate them. Many examples were given especially where about three (3) teachers were dismissed for impregnating three student girls under the pretext that they were providing them with extra classes. The affected girls dropped out of school. The study

revealed that there were 13 pregnancy cases involving teachers in the District but sometimes the teachers are shielded by school authorities. Often such teachers were merely asked to take care of the pregnant girls to term without disciplinary actions. Meanwhile, many of the sexual relations between teachers and students girls are forced.

The study also revealed that other workers in the District sometimes use money to lure the girls into sexual relationship after which they asked for transfers to other places and this leads to the withdrawal of the girls from school. Poverty and lack of proper parenthood are the most common causes of the early pregnancy in the District. Jingle (1988) confirms that pregnancy and child bearing usually end a girl school carrier.

### **Rural Residence**

The study revealed that rural residence is also a major determinant of girl child education in the District. Girls who live in rural communities with no school may either commute daily to school in a neighbouring town or live away from home. The type of school to send the girl child determines the success and the completion of that the girl in school. Girls sent to rural schools often perform poorly as compared to girls sent to the urban schools. Akande (1987) also supports the fact that female students in urban school perform better and achieve more than those in rural schools. This assertion was also supported by Weis (1986). He found that in Ghana 86% of the secondary school girls were enrolled in low status schools.

Non-availability of good schools in the rural areas in the District makes it impossible for girls to acquire higher education. Reference can be made to the 2007 senior secondary school results where the students from rural schools in the Northern Region performed poorly as compare to students from urban senior secondary schools (GES, 2007). Chernioehovsky (1985) also argues that the area of residence is predicative of enrolment and attainment of all levels of education. The data indicate that girls in urban schools are more likely than girls in rural schools to perform better.

### **Parental Income**

The study revealed that high income parents are able to enrol and support their girls education starting from early childhood development centres, where solid foundations are laid. Some even send them to preparatory schools. Sanabary (1988) noted that there is a relationship between incomes of parents and girl's education. Girls from middle income and high-income families are likely to enter school and progress all the way to the tertiary institutions than those from low-income families. The findings from the District reveal a strong correlation that corroborates Sanabary's study on Saudi Arabia. Those who are able to meet the cost of their girls' education are those who are educated, and are engaged in other incomes generating activity. Table 1 below shows that generally participants fall below the poverty line. At GHC 36.10 they fall below even the minimum line.

**Table: 1 Percentage distribution of level of income (monthly)**

Amount	Frequency	cumulative	Percent
Below GH20.00	46	46	30.7
GH 20.00 – 40.00	36	82	24.0
40.00 – 60.00	56	138	37.3
Above 60.00	12	150	8.0
Total	150		100
Average Income	36.10		

Source: field survey 2005.

### **Cost of educating the girl-child.**

The cost of educating the girl-child in the District is very high. Seventy-three percent responded that due to the cost, they are unable to send their girl children to good schools or even buy uniforms and relevant textbooks. Where the school-aged children are many preferences is given to boy children whose educational costs are lower. Only twenty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that costs of girls' education are comparable to that of boys.

A research conducted by the Federation of African Women Educationists (1990) revealed that parents in the rural areas of Ghana are not able to meet the financial, material and equipments demands of their girls in education. According to them, girls are less likely to go to school with torn uniforms therefore parents tend to spend more money on uniform and on transport cost for girls for safety reasons. This raises costs for girls and explains the negative parental attitudes towards girls' education.

In the study revealed 90% percent of the respondents explained that due to poverty, they found it difficult to send their girls to school. It was revealed that due to poverty, parents were unable to meet the material demands of their girl children as well as their male children. Households spend money on school registration fees and contribution to Parents Teachers Association dues. Due to their inability to meet these obligations, female children are sometimes withdrawn from school and especially so when are perform poorly in examinations.

### **Work Loads**

Out of the 150 respondents, 65.3% indicated that they allow their daughters to cook and sweep the compound at home before and after school while 17.3% responded that they always engaged their girl-child in petty trading. The same percentage (17.3%) also indicated that their girl-child do washing and fetching of water at home. This is a clear indication that parents really engage their girl-children at home in the district. The study revealed that the

heavy work load of girls in the households prevent them from attending school or remaining in school. They again argued, "Girls unlike boys are expected to assist their mothers with domestic chores." This suggests that whether girls are in schools or not they have to cook, wash, clean, and fetch water in the household. This goes a long way to retard their progress in education as they have no time to study and are always tired after such work. In spite of the effects of the workload on girls in the household in the District, some participants argued that *"Household chores prepare the girls for the future, which shall make them responsible when they marry".( The Assemblyman of Zantili)*

**Table 2: Types of House Chores for Girls**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Cooking and sweeping	98	65.3
Petty trading	26	17.3
Washing and fetching of water	26	17.3
Total	150	100

Source: Field survey 2005

In support of the devastating effects of the household chores, Jungle (1988; cited in the Theresa and Haveneld, 1993) explained that the demand for household labour falls more heavily on Muslim girls in Northern Nigeria. The mothers depend on their girls to help with food preparation and fetching of water. Mathew (1999) also argued that when girls are even enrolled, the burdens of domestic chores stand in the way in educational progress. A study in Mozambique primary schools revealed that the single most important factor in poor performance was time strain imposed by the girl child's workload.

### **Parental Preferences**

Also, 54% of parents prefer the boy child to go to school while 46% prefer the girl child. Though the percentages for both choices are close, the former can be explained by the perception that boys perform better than girls academically and the return to their education is higher compared to girls. Also, it is widely believed that girls would likely become pregnant before their graduation. Some parents believe that investing in the education for the girl child is a waste of resources thus the sooner the girl enters into marriage the better. Chernichovsky (1985) explained that the selection of specific child for education needs not be gender biased. In the face of limited resources, the male child is normally preferred, and this represents a strategy to disperse risk. Many decide to educate only children who they expect will do well in school and succeed in getting a remunerative job, which can help the family. In that case, the male child is preferred. It can, therefore, be explained that in the district, the male child is preferred to go to school at the expense of the girl child. Child preference works in favour of the male child.

### **Marriage**

The study revealed that there was strong believe that educating the girl child to the university will make it difficult for her to get a man willing to marry her. It was also revealed that, some parents in the District favour marriage because of the bride wealth they get from



the husbands. This wealth helps the family to address immediate economic demands the study revealed. There is a widespread perception that men do not want to marry educated women because they will challenge them therefore, a girl willing to marry should not aspire to higher education otherwise she will not get a husband. The perception that women belong to their husbands also discourages many parents from sending their girls to school or even invest in them.

The study also revealed that girls in the District normally perform poorly in examination. This discourages many parents from sending their daughters to school or keep them in school. The performance of girls compare to boys in schools in the District has tended to be lower. This is as a result of some factors already discussed. Therefore, poorer parents who have very limited resources and must maximize their usage withdraw their daughters from school to enable them save and use the resources for other needs of the family.

There is a general perception that educated women do not want to give birth and that highly educated women from the District find it difficult to get husbands thus traditional families which value children and marriage are discouraged by it.

### **Polygyny**

As already explained under religion, majority of the respondents were Muslims who cherish polygyny to the extent that those with only one wife are still being considered bachelors sometimes these men are not invited to attend meetings relevant to the welfare of the communities.

The practice of polygyny has its roots from the widely practiced Islamic religion. According to the Quran, Muslims can marry one, two, three or four if only they can do justice among their wives but any Muslim who feels he cannot treat his wives equally is expected to marry only one. Due to the misinterpretation of the Quran, Muslims have resorted to marrying many women without regard to whether they can do justice among the women.

Polygyny plays an important role when it comes to sending the children to school. The study revealed that parents are unable to meet the cost of their children education because of the heavy responsibilities of taking care of all the wives. The girl child is always at a disadvantage when it comes to who should go to school and because of the numerous problems that some polygynous families face in the District. They give out some of their children especially the female children out as maid servants in the urban areas such as Tamale. However, in these areas, they are not allowed to attend school, and even sometimes not given proper care.

### **Child Betrothal**

The study revealed that 66% of the people no longer practice child Betrothal. Only 34% indicated that they still practised it . This was especially so among the Komkomba .

According to Junge (1988), in Ethiopia studies have shown that 20% of the primary school children were either promised marriage or divorced. This was the most common reason given for the non-enrolment of girls. Weis (1988) also explained that child betrothal is practiced in the northern part of Ghana.

The study revealed that betrothal used to be practised those who still do it are ignorant of the dangers involved. In families where the phenomenon is still secretly practised, the girl

child is either prevented by the supposed husband from going to school or withdrawn early in the education to fulfil the cultural obligation.

### **Foster Parenting**

Seventy two percent of the respondents explained that foster parenting is widely practised in the District while only twenty-eight percent indicated that it is a thing of the past. It is a cultural practice by the Dagomba. Parents give out their sons or daughters to other relatives to take care of them. This practice is aimed at maintaining extended family relationships. The maintenance of these extended relations leads the affected girls and boys to suffer in the hands of their aunties. The study revealed that parents in the District, especially, those in the remote areas give their daughters to other family members in the urban areas to take care of them. As a result, these family members prevent these girls from going to school or sometimes even withdraw them from school to work at home.

The maltreatment that the girls in fosterage suffer in the hands of their supposed relatives in the form of heavy work burdens and neglect are accompanied by absenteeism, fatigue, poor performance and even drop out. It became clear from the discussion that foster parents do allow their biological children but not the fostered children. Samuel (1991) explains that a combination of factors is responsible for this situation. He notes that foster parenting by aunts largely deny many girls the opportunity to enrol and stay in school to complete.

### **CONCLUSION**

Quality, access, retention and achievement are essential elements of educational measures designed to ensure that girls attain their full potential. Getting girls into school is crucial as it ensures that they stay in school, learn and achieve. This is however subject to the multiple factors that girls face in education. There are many opportunities and programmes that are in place to ensure equity in education. Seizing these opportunities will ensure a relevant high quality education for girls and also move closer to making education not just a lofty ideal, but a reality for thousands of girls in the northern part of Ghana and the world as a whole. Cultural practices are essential as they are handed down from generation to generation and as the world has become a global village, modernity becomes an essential part of human development in the society. Therefore, systems and practices that deter the social, political educational and economic development of the society should be looked at seriously and if possibly abolished.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Proper Islamic teachings should be encouraged in the District since most parents misinterpret the Quran. This will enable parents who think that Islam discourages girl child education to change their perceptions and send their daughters to school. This recommendation can be achieved if the District office of the Ghana Education Office in the champions this crusade.

It is also suggested that promoting income generating activities, especially, by women would help them to support their children, in particular, their female children, in school. Studies for example (Summers, 1993; Acharya & Bennett, 1983) have shown that if women's incomes increase they tend to devote lot more of it to education, health and food. Women tend to be very close to their girl-child and are interested in supporting them. Women

traders and farmers could be the target of such a scheme. This shall empower the women financially to help curb the problem of girl child education in the district.

In addition, an endowment fund for girl child education in the District can be very useful for girls in several ways. It can offer scholarship for girls. The scholarship can be for girls who demonstrate interest and exceptional academic potential in mathematics, science, subjects and English at any level of the educational system. Scholarships should be extended to girls to continue their education after SSS. The scholarship could cover schools fees, uniforms, textbooks, meals and exercise books. This will go a long way to change the attitude of parents and even relief the poor parents who could not sponsor their female children's education in the District.

A community oriented awareness campaign on the value and benefits to be derived from educating the girl child by the parents should be initiated. This awareness raising campaign should be directed at parents, the girl child and community leaders. It should address some of the cultural and traditional practices that are militating against girl child education in the District as well as how parents and the girl child can overcome these practices. During the campaign byelaws enacted by both the traditional authorities and the District Assemblies should be discussed with the communities. Vices in the community that compel girls to drop from schools should be identified and discussed. The campaign should take different forms like house-to-house or community durbars, seminars and debates. The District Assembly should be the key institution to champion this crusade so as to improve the state of girls' education in the district.

The District Assemblies and the traditional authorities should enact byelaws to promote and sustain girl child education in the district. The byelaws of the Assemblies should seek to ensure that all the national policies of the government promoting Free Compulsory Basic Universal Education are implemented by all educational circuits of the District and set up enforceable charges for parents and educational authorities in the District who violate the byelaws on girls' education. The byelaws should also include punishments for adults in the district who engage in activities that undermine girls' education particularly when the girls get pregnant. In addition to that, the traditional authorities should enact byelaws to out-law the traditional practices example fostering, child betrothal, early marriage, etc. that are inimical to girls' education in the District.

Sex education in schools in the District should be intensified to help build up awareness among girls about possible outcome of sexual intercourse such as pregnancy and sexual transmitted diseases (AIDS). The school is the only institution that can offer such education to girls in the District. This would prevent them from being drop out as a result of pregnancy or HIV/AIDS.

An opportunity should be created for girls who are unable to excel academically to acquire vocational skills that will enable them earn means of subsistence. There are many girls in the District who are forced to drop out from school and they are left without any option to develop life skills due to early pregnancy. If these institutions are set up in the District they will provide trainings and skills development for girls who drop out early. The non-formal education can also be extended and strengthened in all villages in the District. Efforts should be made to have more adult female as well as girls to attend.

The participation of childbearing women in non-formal education programmes will enable them to understand better why they should send their girls to school. Adolescent girls who are unable to enrol into the formal school system due to betrothal or household chores

should be encouraged to attend non-formal education classes. Uneducated men should also be allowed to participate in this education since parental education has a positive influence on the daughters' education.

School Management Committees should be strengthened in all communities of the District. Heads of schools and teachers should ensure that school management committees are actively involved in the management of the school. The school management's key roles should include making sure that parents are adhering to the different enactments by the assembly and traditional leaders on the education of the girl child. This will give the parents the opportunity to air their views concerning the sanctions to teachers who impregnate the student girls. Finally, more primary, and junior secondary schools should be opened in the district so that those girls who commute daily to attend school in the urban areas will have access in their own communities

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