

## THE CHALLENGES OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLGIRLS' EDUCATION IN GASHUA COMMUNITY OF YOBE STATE

BY

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### ABSTRACT

*Girl's education is confronted with many notable challenges across the world, especially in the developing countries of the world. These challenges make it impossible for many girls to achieve their educational dreams or goals. This study therefore investigated challenges which cause school dropout among senior secondary school girls in Gashua community of Yobe state. The study was guided by feminist theory and adopted descriptive survey design. Data were collected through qualitative and quantitative methods. These involved ten qualitative interviews conducted among senior secondary school girls and fifty copies of questionnaire administered among senior secondary school teaches. Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis, while quantitative data were analyzed using frequency distribution and percentage. Seven of the senior secondary school girls were between 15 years and 17 years and five of them were in senior secondary I. Twenty-seven of the teachers were male and nineteen of the teachers were bachelor degrees holders. Gender discrimination, parental negative influence, hawking of goods, misleading religious teachings, early marriage, poor school infrastructure, sexual harassment, social exclusion of girls and poverty were strong challenges identified in the study which cause school dropout among senior secondary school girls. Domestic chores and lack of female teachers as challenges against girls education need to be fully established in future studies. Poverty was discovered to be the outstanding challenges among others. Establishment of government girls' secondary schools, provision of educational materials engagement of qualified teachers, creating more awareness about girls' education at grass root level, counseling parents and students and community intervention of rich people to assist girls' education were recommended.*

**Keywords:** Girl's Education, Dropout, Schools, Challenge, Community.

## Introduction

The challenges associated with girls' education in Nigeria are very critical to the study of education. They count against efforts toward ensuring educational quality and equality for both boys and girls within educational system in Nigeria. Education is the right of every child, therefore, every girl. It is a channel of transforming both the life of girl and that of her community at large.

Girls without education are prevented from the opportunity to develop their full potential and to play a productive and equal role in their families (Kanuwa, Biriti and Yusuf, 2013) However, it is very sympathetic that many factors play preventive roles against girls' education in Nigeria. Such factors include the economic factors, cultural factors, religious factors and social factors. It is imperative to mention that girls' education is improving gradually at the primary school level and junior secondary school level. However, there is a sharp drop at the senior secondary school level, especially in the northern states of Nigeria.

Aja-Okofie (2013) emphasises that Nigerian girls drop-out of school earlier than their male counterparts and that evidences further shows that more than two thirds of 15-19 year old girls in Northern Nigeria were unable to have complete education at senior secondary school.

Factors which are responsible for this high rate of drop-outs among girls at senior secondary schools were not adequately addressed in researches. Hence, this research is conducted to bridge the gap in the literature.

The following are the objectives of this study:

- (1) To identify challenges which cause drop-outs among girls in senior secondary schools in Gashua community.
- (2) To find out how the identified challenges can be eradicated to improve girls' education in senior secondary schools in Gashua community.

The following are the research questions posed by this study:

- (1) What are the challenges which cause drop-out among girls in senior secondary schools in Gashua community?
- (2) How can the identified challenges be eradicated to improve girls' education in senior secondary schools in Gashua community?

## Literature Review

The researched articles on challenges confronting girls' education are very numerous in educational literature. The challenges started from home (Kapur, 2018 ) and spread to the

entire society. The enumerated challenges are religious, cultural, economic, societal and within educational institutions.

### **The causes of the challenges of girls' education**

The challenges confronting girls, education are rooted in the male domination nature of our society. The patriarchal society is found in a male controlled social settling where women were mostly deprived of decision making aspect like girls education (Sarkar, Reza and Hossain, 2014). The realities of a woman's deprivation are manifested even before birth. From a girls' earliest age, men start practicing their decisive role in the most important issues of her life, ranging from education to selection of her husband (Jamal, 2016). Men dominate women in every country in the world (Aja-Okorie, 2013) and this has caused barriers to equal educational opportunity between boys and girls (Nwogu, 2015).

Discrimination is another factor against girls' education. The way students are treated in school can trigger social identity threat (Darling-Hammond, Flock, Cook-Harvey, Baron and Osher, 2020). The discrimination against girls' education started from home. Girls are educated in different manner as compared to boys. Girls are considered to be fundamentally different from boys (Kapur, 2018). Kapur (2018) argued further that girls grow up believing that they are grossly inferior to boys just because they are girls. Ambreen and Mohyuddin (2014) summarize that such discrimination between male and female children created different barriers to female education. Gender discrimination is the major determinant responsible for social exclusion of girls from education sector (Sattar, Yasin and Afzal, 2012). Discrimination leads to stereotyping which exists not only in the society but also crucially within schools. The stereotype is that boys will always be better than girls because that is what people think (Wetton, Radley, Jones and Pearce, 2013).

Parental factors also count as challenges against girls' education. Kapur (2018) argued that parental educations are vital elements of children completing secondary education. Furthermore, to majority of the parents, girls education is less important because no matter what level of education the girl attains, their hope is to see the girl child get married (Tyookaa, Amaka and Nor, 2014). Fathers may deliberately not allowing their daughters to go to school because they consider investment in female education as unprofitable, since the girls are likely to end up in another man's home (Okorie, 2017). This is a serious societal conservative attitude towards girls which is one of the important factors that restricted their achievement education and movement outside the home (Sarkar et.al, 2014). This is because women are usually considered main opposing authority in the family (Khan, Malik, Nazir, Mushtaq and Mujahid, 2014).

The traditions, cultures, customs and socio cultural values are some of the factors influencing gender bias in the education sector (Aja-Okorie, 2013). According to Aja-

Okorie (2013), there are cultural and social beliefs, attitudes and practices which prevent girls from benefitting from educational opportunities to the same extent as boys. Ambreen and Mohyuddun (2014) argued that culturally, parents think that investing more on their girls' education is of no use for them as some other family gets the benefit. Hence, there is universal essential cultural bias in favour of males as posited by Kapur(2018). Satter et.al (2012) explained that value expectations and submissiveness are the foremost blockade to girls' education. Booth (2014) supported this in her study of education and gender in contemporary Cambodia; she argued that Cambodia's cultural norms are one of the root causes of women's inability to move ahead in school. Kainuwa, Binti and Yusuf (2013) posit that in cultures and traditions where female seclusion is practiced the impact of that low participation of girl child in school is substantial. Jamal (2016) also argued in similar way that Pashtunwali tribal code in which men's honour and the dignity of family and clan supersedes many other priorities, acts as major barrier to girls education. In order to eradicate bias in girls' education, therefore, there should be a caring, culturally responsive learning community (Darling-Hammond et.al, 2020).

Religion also plays roles in gender inequality within educational sector. Daraz, Khan and Sheikh (2013) argued that deprivation of women in the educational sector can be linked to many factors which included religion. Khan et.al (2014) said conservative religious group never believe in the concept of girls' education as well as women empowerment. According to Sarkar et.al (2014), conservative religious leaders of traditional rural society believe that when women become educated, they become disrespectful and no longer adhere to male dominance. Khan et.al (2014) held the same view that females are deprived their basic right of education because of misinterpretation of Islamic values presented by the religion leaders. Mvendaga et.al (2014) citing Enejere (1991) avers that gender inequality especially in northern Nigeria is promoted by religious and communal customs which have grave consequence for the individual and the society which make girls dysfunctional members of the society. Religion therefore, is one of the ways of social exclusion (Department for International Development 2005). Finally Sahu, Jeffery and Nakkeeran (2017) assert that the root cause of Muslim women's poor educational attainment is often alleged to be religious conservatism and an Islamic aversion to educating girls.

Other factors examined in the literature which negate girls' education are economic burdens on girls and domestic chores. Kapur (2018) argued that Gitonga (2009) opined that girl children are sent home to work, so as to assist the parents in raising funds to educate their brothers which in the end compromise the girl children's education. Angela (2011) in Kainuwa et al (2013) reported that impoverished parents often feel they need their girls' labour for additional income to help with the grueling requirements of life. Raj, Salazar, Jackson, Wyss, Mclendon, Khanna, Belayneh and McDougai (2019) in their study, reported that barriers to secondary education among poorer families in Ethiopia come from the need for girls to miss school in order to work in the markets, selling items.

Domestic chores also affect girls' education. Bardley (2000) in his thesis asserted that many parents believe that girls had to take care of the home and provide money for the family; therefore, they had to go out and do work in markets and fields to sustain family. Okorie (2017) also opined similarly that girls often spend significantly more time on household chores and child rearing or attending to sick and this inevitably limits the time available for education. Ambreen and Mohyuddin (2014) posited that there is no balance of work between males and females. Boys have a lot of time for their studies. Girls of the same age have to do a lot of work at home. All the works by a girl goes unnoticed, unacknowledged and unearned. Jamal (2016) in his study of Pashtu explained that as woman's life is centred in the home with predefined roles and responsibilities, home making, food preparation and child bearing which do not support her education. In similar way Sarkar et.al (2014) in the study of rural Bangladesh argued that female children are usually engaged in household responsibilities that plausibly limit their chances to be attached with educational institutions.

Kainwa et.al (2013) revealed that girls are likely to have less time available after school to study because they have assumed multitude of household chores. Kapur (2018) asserted that girls are the liabilities, they are meant to learn only the implementation of the household chores. They are mostly trained regarding the performance of the household chores such as cooking, cleaning, fetching water, rearing of livestock, sewing, embroidery, child rearing and looking after the needs. Department for International Development (2005) in its study reported that girls are also more likely to drop out of school because of these domestic responsibilities.

Poverty and early marriage are other factors considered in the literature which posed as challenges to girls' education. Bardley (2000) posited that bottom line surrounding access and participation in education is poverty. Okorie (2017) asserted that poverty has remained a serious enemy of girlchild's education. Jamal (2016) argued that in Pashtu region he studied, girls are encouraged to stay at home, away from school because of the poverty in the region. In a similar way Sarkar et.al (2014) reported that in rural Bangladesh, a large number of people live under poverty line and that also have an influence on girl's education. Hence, due to lack of finances, capable and diligent girls are required to give up their aspirations of pursuing higher education (Kapur, 2018). Khan et al (2014) also identified the same factor in the study of Pakhtun society. According to them most of the family are living under the poverty line and marked the poverty as a main cause of women deprivation from their basic right of education. Abbas (2012) in his thesis, cited report of FAWE Somalia Chapter (2010) where it was indicated that family income has a major influence to the girls' education. In another study, Mvendaga et al (2014) posited that with almost 70% of the Nigerian population living below the poverty line, girls are often sent to hawk wares on the streets and barrier to girl child's education in Nigeria, especially in the north. Poverty causes early marriage because of the economic benefit it brings to the bride's family. Girls often have limited control over their futures and early marriage is a reality for many (Department for International Development,

2005). Marriage is considered as a final goal, girls, leave their natal homes on marriage and need not to be delayed beyond age of 20 years or so.

Kainuwa et.al (2013) citing Nayana (1985) reported that surveys of parents of drop outs in India indicate that they withdraw daughters from school when they see education as conflicting with marriage. Other factors which pose challenges to girls' education are lack of safety and sexual harassment. In order for successful learning to take place, there must be physical and emotional safety (Darling-Hammond et.al, 2020). Kainuwa et.al (2013) argued that journey to school may be unsafe and many girls may be physically attacked either on public transportation in urban areas or remote part of rural areas. Sahu et.al (2017) also gave a similar argument. According to them there has been striking increase in the reporting of crime against women in urban India and anxiety about women's security is a crucial hurdle that may hamper young women's pursuit of higher education. Sexual harassment makes safety of girls and women difficult. Bardely (2000) opined that girls are daily targets of rape and assault. They are not safe at home or at school (during or after school).

Sarkar et.al (2014) argued that parents withdrew their daughters from school because sexual harassment was the common phenomenon in the area they studied. In a similar explanation, Kainuwa et.al (2013) opined that parents may be afraid of sexual harassment and abduction and therefore, withdraw their daughters from school. Khan and Sheikh (2013) in the same way were of the opinion that sexual harassment and exploitation deter parents from sending a girl child to school.

The school environment, school facilities and female teacher personnel also play roles as challenges to girls' education. Department of International Development (2005) indicates that a school environment may be hostile to girls. Physical and sexual violence against women that is common in many societies is reflected in the school environment. Kapur (2018) argues that lack of resources and inadequate infrastructure affect girl child's education. The active presence of physical and infrastructure hindrances adversely affect women's education and status and in some cases, physical impediments such as lack of schools (Daraz et al, 2013). Jamal (2016), re-nitrated that in his study, emphasis was placed on the lack of adequate facilities in school especially deteriorating situation in government run schools as challenges against girls' education.

Shortage of female teachers is another issue of challenge. Jamal (2016) argued that if there are no female teachers, parents will not send their daughters to school. In a similar argument, Daraz et.al (2013) posited that lack of female teachers adversely affects women's status in regard to education. Parents want their female children to learn only from female teachers (Kapur, 2018). However, negative influence of female teachers can contribute to girls excluding themselves from school and extracurricular activities (Wetton et.al, 2013). Warm, caring and supportive student-teacher relationships as well as other child-adult relationships are linked to better school performance and engagement (Darling-Hammond, 2020). Teachers, therefore, should have a pleasant attitude and an

approachable nature (Karpur, 2018). Absenteeism is another challenge. The rate of absenteeism has an impact on the drop outs of girls from school. Girls are at a larger risk of absenteeism, reiteration and drop out than boys (Kapur, 2018).

Finally lack of role models also poses challenges to girls' education. Abass (2013) pinpointed that lack of role model for girls is one of the challenges facing girls' education. Female role models are rarely found for inspiration according to OECD (2000) in Daraz, et.al (2013). This is more lacking in rural areas where it is very difficult to find strong female role models where there were even fewer schools(Booth, 2014). Having female role models will even enhance women's entrance into school leadership (Clark and Johnson, 2017).

### **Benefits of girls' education**

There are many benefits of sending girls to school. Aja-Okorie (2013) opined that girl's education will address inequality between boys and girls; will reduce poverty; improve family health; increase earning for women and enhance human capital. In Somani (2017) benefits of girls education include: increase in awareness of fundamental human rights of girls; improvement in gender equality; positive change and development in society; better educated children; economic development and poverty reduction; better health and quality of life; empowerment and leadership skills; active participation in decision making; confidence; independence; self-respect; reduction in child marriages; reaching full potential and aspirations achievement; birth control and small family size; reduction in mortality rate; positive influence and inspiration for others; ability to change; effective investment; peace and stability in society and resistance to domestic violence.

### **Solving the challenges of girls' education**

Challenges against girls' education can be 'dismantled'. The legislative arm of government must be precise on the principle of gender equality in education by creating viable channels to the legal rights of women (Aja-Okorie, 2013). Apart from legislation, government needs to build more schools (Booth, 2014). In order to remove the challenges, there should be effective awareness programs (Sarkar, 2014). School information campaign is quite necessary (Karpur, 2018). Moreover, there should be awareness about importance of educating girls (Somani, 2017). Media can serve as source of awareness. Through media people can be made aware that it is important for girls to get education (Ambreen and Mohyuddin, 2014).

As ways of removing challenges of girl's education, Sattar et.al (2012) suggested: enrollment of all children in schools; improving quality of education; provision of well qualified teachers; removing gender disparity in education; building relevant technical skills and mobilization of adequate financial resources. Okorie (2017) counseled: intensive gender inclusive culture; enforcement of available legislation on principle of gender equality and that parents and government must take serious banning of street hawking among school girls. Nwogu (2015) also suggested stoppage of domestic servitude and forced labour and street trading to curb challenges against girls' education.

Mvendaga et.al (2014) opined that alleviation of poverty; provision of free compulsory primary and secondary education; enlightenment of parents and legislation against underage marriage will solve the challenges against girls' education. Department for International Development (2005) suggested recruitments of qualified teachers and educational officials with good working conditions as part of the solutions to the challenges of girls' education. Finally, quality assurance and objective achievements are also the essential elements of an educational strategy to ensure boys and girls explore and realize their best in schools (Daraz et.al, 2013).

### **Theoretical framework**

The study used feminist theory as a theoretical framework. Feminist theory is an expression of gender-based domination of women by men (Lawson, 2012). Feminist theory examines inequalities in gender-related issues. It examines also the maintenance of gender roles and inequalities. Radical feminism, in particular, considers the role of the family in perpetuating male dominance. Feminist theory aims to understand the mechanism and roots of gender inequality. It seeks to promote women's rights (Openstax College, 2013).

Feminist theory looks at the world from the vantage points of women. It is a generalized, wide-ranging system of ideas about social life and human experience developed from women centred perspective. The starting point of all its investigation is the situation and experience of women in society. Second, it is the distinctive vantage points of women (Ritzer, 2008).

Feminism itself is a doctrine suggesting that women are systematically disadvantaged in modern society and advocating equal opportunities for men and women. It also means a socio- political theory and practice which aims to free all women from male supremacy and exploitation (Rao, 2012). It also connotes advocacy to patriarch and sexism (Macions and Gerber, 1999).

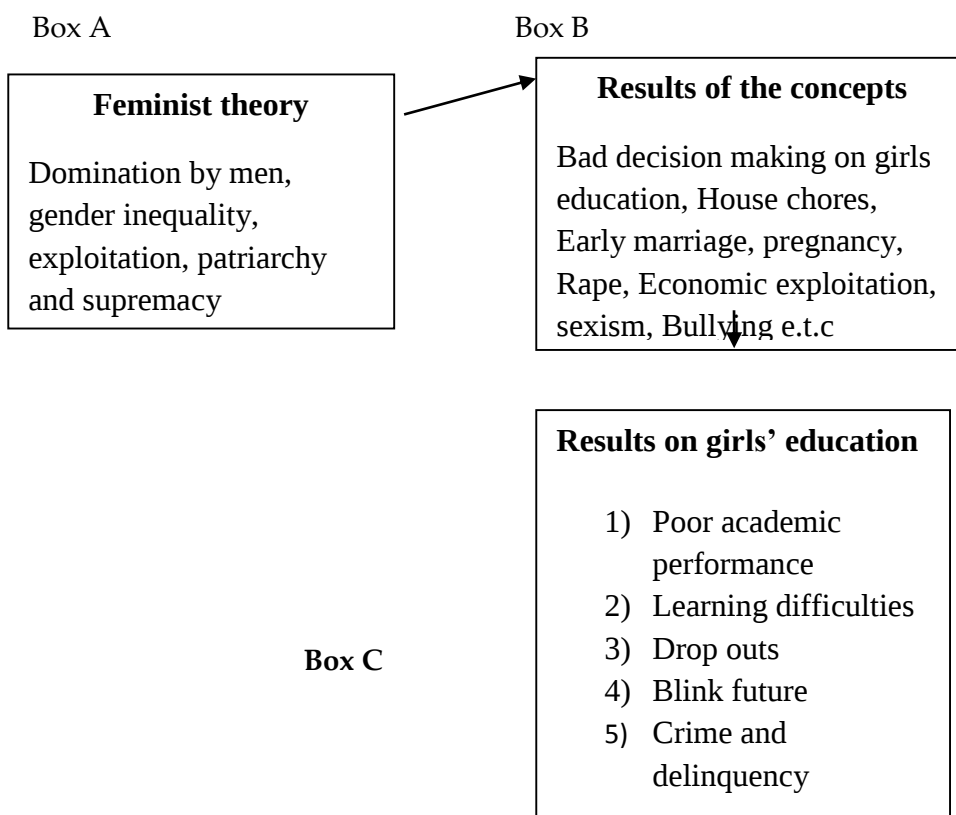
Feminism is classified into three categories: Liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism. Liberal feminism thinks that individual should be free to develop their own talent and pursue their own interest. Socialist feminism argues that capitalism intensifies patriarchy by concentrating power and wealth in the hands of a small number of men. Radical feminism however, claims that even a socialist revolution would not end patriarchy. Instead, gender equality can be realized only by eliminating the cultural notion of gender itself (Macions and Garber, 1999).

Feminist Sociology itself encompasses both the micro and macro levels of analysis. They centre on women's lives. The micro level examines the re-production of gender through such things as talk body languages and emotion management. The macro level examines

many constraints and forms of resistance in women's lives in such situational realms as politics, economics, religion, family and schooling (Macionis and Gerber, 1999).

As explained earlier on, this study was anchored on feminist theory. The theory perfectly fit the study. The figure below is the emerging framework for the study and the explanations on the framework were given to show relevancies of the theory to the study.

The emerging theoretical framework shows the interplay of variables. It is a boost to the development of theoretical model and analytical illustrations used in the expiration of concepts and variables under study.



### Emerging framework

The three boxes above explain the emerging framework. In Box A above, the concepts under feminist theory are listed. The first concept under feminist theory is domination. The theory explains that men always dominate women in every relationship or association, even within school environment. According to feminist theorists, perpetual domination of men over women in our society is one of the factors which spur feminism and feminist movement over decades. Tendencies for men to dominate women cause gender inequality. Gender inequality favours men over women in our society. Such gender inequality is visible in politics, economy, workplace, family and education. Gender inequality always put women at disadvantages.

Domination within the schools by boys for example, put girls at disadvantages, such domination reinforced gender disparity and gender inequality among students during teaching and learning activities. More emphases are on boys' success than girls' success. Exploitation is another feminist concept. Feminist theories argued that arrangements in society positioned men in such a way that women are exploited. Educational system and other systems are so arranged to give access to men to exploit women. For instance, time and right of girls are usually exploited to favour boys at the family level, even within the school. For instance, girls clean the classrooms and do other school chores. This consequently affects time for reading and to prepare for other school activities. Patriarchy nature of our society is another concept argued by feminist theorists. Patriarchy creates a wide gap difference in gender roles and power. It sanctions male domination (Maha- Patra, 2012).

Finally, supremacy is another concept. The concept is anchored on the patriarchy belief that everything about men is supreme against those of women. Men supremacy underrates women and subjugates them in our society. This starts from having preference for male child over female child, educating male child as against female child and this continues in other areas of life.

The Box B explained the consequences. The consequences of the above explained concepts on girls' education cannot be set aside. The domination, gender inequality, exploitation patriarchy belief system and supremacy decide the fate of education of the girls. For instance, father may take decision that his daughters will not attend school or stop schooling at a particular level. Household chores are considered to be the responsibilities of female children while male children are except from such chores. Heavy burden from household chores may prevent girls from attending school or cause drop out of school. Washing, cleaning, cooking and nursing younger children can seriously hamper the learning activities of girls at schools.

Domination by men in decision making can result into early marriage for girls at a certain level of their education. Such decision may be taken by their fathers because of the belief that such girls may prove stubborn or difficult to control when they acquire more education.

Moreover pressure from suitors of the girls may result into pregnancies which may terminate the schooling career of such affected girls. In some circumstances, male teachers may be even responsible for such pregnancies. Rape is a product of male domination and supremacy in our society. Many girls were raped on their way to school, especially in rural areas and some male teachers were guilty of the act. Rape may lead to girls dropping out of school because of the trauma and public shame.

Economic exploitation is another factor which resulted from male domination and supremacy. In many households, girls engage in economic activities like buying and selling, hawking, farming and so on, to generate income to feed and take care of their

families. Such incomes can be used to finance the education of male children in the family at the detriment of the female children. Sexism is another effect of male domination. In education system, there exist beliefs that girls are not brilliant like boys or that girls cannot perform well in some courses or subjects. In schools, girls are expected to be passive and not engage in any school activities that are considered masculine. All these discourage girls and may lead them into dropping out of school.

Finally, bullying which is usually carried out by boys is another resultant effect of male domination and supremacy. Girls that face problem of bullying in schools may have their ambition of schooling terminated abruptly. Girls under this situation may not like to continue their schooling to avoid the bullies. Boys who bully girls may do this to win their love or to extort money or materials things from them or to intimidate them, especially when those girls are brilliant.

The results of the factors discussed on girl's education cannot be jettisoned. Those results are listed in box C. The first result is learning difficulties. Girls who are saddled with household chores, economic activities, discriminated against because of their sex or bullied in the school may encounter learning difficulties. The learning abilities of such girls may be seriously affected.

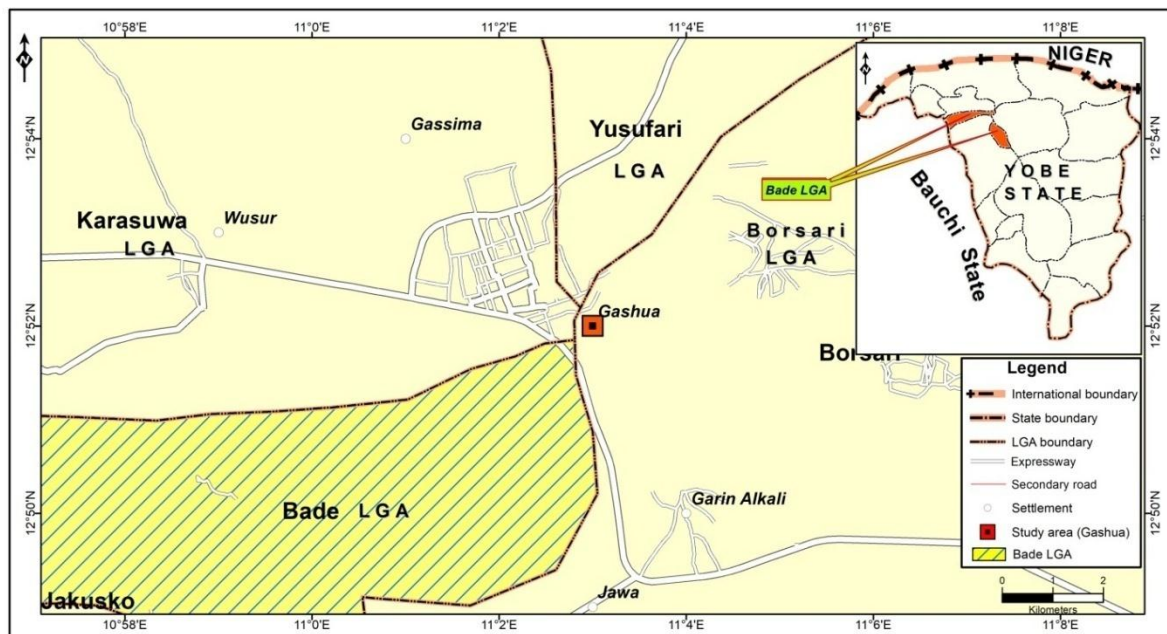
In education, learning difficulties lead to poor academic performances. Girls who perform poorly in school may eventually drop out of the school system. Hence, poor academic performance engineers dropping out of school. Other factors that may cause drop out are; early marriage, pregnancy, rape, sexism and bullying.

Girls that drop out of school may face a very bleak future. In some occasions, such girls may take to delinquent behaviours which are likely to be pathway to criminal behaviours as indicated in Box C in the figure above.

### **Research Methods**

In this study, survey design was adopted. It involved the collection of information from a sample of individuals (Schutt, 2004). Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to ensure adequate validity and reliability. The two methods were combined to enable the extraction of descriptive, analytic and narrative information concerning the challenges against senior secondary school girls' education in Gashua community. It gives the researcher a broader approach to the research (Neumann, 2003).

The population of study consists of girls in senior secondary schools within Gashua community and the entire male and female teachers. However, the entire population of study was not contacted for the study. Few of them were selected through sampling to participate in the study.



#### Arrow indicating the community where the study was carried out

Probability sampling techniques were employed to select samples which participated in the study. Simple random sampling method under probability sampling technique was used to select the teachers and the senior secondary school girls who participated in the study. However, purposive sampling method under non-probability technique was employed to select the senior secondary schools where the samples were drawn because they are girls' secondary schools and have large number of girls at the senior secondary level.

Three data collection tools were be used: questionnaire, photographs and interview. Fifty copies of a questionnaire were administered among the senior secondary school teachers. A photo camera was also employed. The photographs of the senior secondary schools where the study took place were taken. In-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted among ten(10) selected senior secondary school girls from five different senior secondary schools.

Procedure for the data collection was through face to face or personal contacts between the researcher and the respondents. The questionnaires were administered personally to the respondents by the researcher. However, the head teachers assisted in coordinating the retrieval of the copies of questionnaire administered. The in-depth interviews were conducted personally by the researcher. It is took the average of 40 minutes to complete one in-depth interview schedule. However, the service of interpreter was employed to assist the researcher in overcoming language barrier where necessary.

The qualitative data which emerged from in-depth interviews were contently analyzed. The in-depth interviews were translated and transcribed. Qualitative data were analyzed using manual content analysis.

The quantitative data emerged from the questionnaire administered. Copies of the questionnaire for the study were first sorted out and those not properly filled were cleaned. In order to minimize errors, data from the questionnaire were coded to pave way for editing of data before use. The analysis of data emphasized comparative and relative frequencies. Univariate analyses were used in interpreting demographic characteristics of the respondents and their responses, using frequency tables.

Ethics refer to the abstract set of standard and principles that are used to determine appropriate and acceptable social conduct (Adler and Clark, 1999). In order to follow ethics in research, the anonymity of the respondents were guaranteed and strictly followed. Therefore, the survey instruments (questionnaire and in-depth interview) did not require names, signatures, addresses or telephone numbers. The confidentiality of the data and information was strictly followed. Data and information were discussed in aggregate, not making references to individual respondents. Finally, the informed consent of the respondent was carried out before the beginning of the research.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

The first sets of data presented are the socio-bio data characteristics of the respondents that were teachers followed by those of the senior secondary school girls who participated in the interview schedules.

#### **The social-bio data characteristics of the respondents (teachers)**

The table below shows the analyses of the socio-data characteristics of the teachers which featured their sexes, age range, religion, educational qualifications and years of experience on teaching profession. A total number of 50 (fifty) teachers participated in filling of the copies of the questionnaire administered during the field work.

**Table1 The Socio-data characteristics of the teachers**

|   | <b>Socio-Bio Data</b>                                                                                                                                           | <b>Frequency</b>                                        | <b>Percentage</b>                                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Sex</b><br>Male<br>Female                                                                                                                                    | 27<br>23                                                | 54.0<br>46.0<br>Total =100                                          |
| 2 | <b>Age-Range</b><br>15-19 years<br>20-24 years<br>25-29 years<br>30-34 years<br>35-39 years<br>40-44 years<br>45-49 years<br>50 years and above                 | 10<br>15<br>15<br>5<br>2<br>Nil<br>1<br>2<br>Total =100 | 20.0<br>30.0<br>30.0<br>10.0<br>4.0<br><br>2.0<br>4.0<br>Total =100 |
| 3 | <b>Religion</b><br>Islam<br>Christianity                                                                                                                        | 41<br>9<br>Total =100                                   | 82.0<br>18.0<br>Total =100                                          |
| 4 | <b>Educational Qualification</b><br>Secondary School Certificate<br>National Diploma<br>National Certificate in Education<br>Bachelor Degrees<br>Master Degrees | 11<br>5<br>13<br>19<br>2<br>Total =100                  | 22.0<br>10.0<br>26.0<br>38.0<br>4.0<br>Total =100                   |
| 5 | <b>Years of Experience on Teaching</b><br>1-5 years<br>6-10 years<br>11-15 years<br>16-20 years<br>21 years Above                                               | 32<br>8<br>4<br>3<br>3<br>Total =100                    | 64.0<br>16.0<br>8.0<br>6.0<br>6.0<br>Total =100                     |
|   |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                         |                                                                     |

**Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021**

The first variable from the above table is sex. The analyses from the data shows that 27 respondents (54.0%) of the respondents were male; while 23 respondent (46.0%) of the

respondent were female. The analyses show that both sexes were fairly represented in the study.

The ages of the respondents were also considered in the study. The respondents between 15 years and 19 years were 10 respondents (20.0%) those between 20 years and 24 years were 15 respondents (30.0%); those between 25 years and 29 years were 15 respondents (30.0%); 5 respondents (10.0%) were between 30 years and 34 years; 2 respondents (4.0%) were between 35 years and 39 years; 1 respondent (2.0%) falls within 45 years and 49 years and finally, 2 respondents (4.0%) were 50 years and above. The analyses show that the respondents between 20 years and 24 years and those between 25 years and 29 years had the highest percentages (30.0% each). Thus indicated that most of the teachers where the study was carried out were young teachers.

The next variable investigated under the socio-bio data of the respondent was the religion. The analyses from the table shows that 41 respondents (82.0%) were adherents of Islam and 9 respondents (18.0%) were adherents of Christianity. This implies that more Muslims participated in the study than Christians. This is not the least expected because Gashua Community is predominantly a Muslim community. Hence, many of the respondents were Muslims.

The educational qualifications of the respondents were also taken into consideration during study. The breakdown of the analyses shows that 11 respondents (22.0%) were holders of senior secondary school certificates; 5 respondents (10.0%) had National Diplomas; 13 respondents (26.0%) had National Certificates in Education, 19 respondents (38.0%) had Bachelor Degrees from various fields of study and lastly, 2 respondents (4.0%) possessed Master Degrees. The analyses show that a very large number of respondents were well educated, for instance they held Bachelor degrees and Master Degrees and at least 26.0% and 10.0% had NCE and ND respectively.

Qualifications matter in teaching profession. It is believed that the higher the qualifications, the better will be the performances of teachers in classrooms. The study also considered the years of experience of the respondents in teaching profession. When analyzed, the largest number of the respondents (32 respondents) which was 64.0% had been teaching between 6 years and 10 years, 4 respondents (8.0%) had been on teaching between 11 years and 15 years, 3 respondents (6.0%) had been teaching between 16 years and 20 years and finally, another 3 respondents (6.0%) had been teaching for 21 years and above. The analyses show that majority of the respondents (64.0%) had limited years of teaching experience.

The socio-bio data of the senior secondary school girls (ten respondents) who participated in the study were also considered. Table.2 shows the analyses of the data.

**Table 2: The socio bio data of the senior secondary school girls**

| <b>Socio-Bio Data</b>  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Class</b>           |                  |                   |
| SSS 1                  | 5                | 50.0%             |
| SSS 2                  | 1                | 10.0%             |
| SSS 3                  | 4                | 40.0%             |
|                        | Total= 10        | Total = 100%      |
| <b>Age-Range</b>       |                  |                   |
| 12 years – 14 years    | NIL              | NIL               |
| 15 years – 17 years    | 7                | 70.0%             |
| 18 years – 20 years    | 3                | 30.0%             |
| 20 years and above     | NIL              | NIL               |
|                        | Total= 100       | Total = 100%      |
| <b>Religion</b>        |                  |                   |
| Islam                  | 10               | 100.0%            |
|                        | Total = 10       | Total= 100%       |
| <b>State of Origin</b> |                  |                   |
| Yobe                   | 10               | 100.0%            |
|                        | Total = 10       | Total = 100%      |

Source: Researcher's Survey 2021

A cursory look at the above table shows that 5 respondents (50.0%) were in senior secondary school 1; 1 respondent (10.0%) was in senior secondary school 2; while 4 respondents (40.0%) were in senior secondary school 3. Majority of the respondents therefore, going by the analyses, were in senior secondary school 1. The age range of the respondents was also considered in the study. The table 4.2.2 indicates that 7 respondents (70.0%) were between 15 years and 17 years; while 3 respondents (30.0%) were between the age of 18 years and 20 years. All the respondents fell within the age brackets for senior secondary school level. Finally the table indicates that all the respondents were Muslims and all of them were from Yobe State. The follow up question on the state of origin indicated that all of them were indigenes of Gashua community.

The section B of the questionnaire administered contained questions on girls' education in Gashua community. The first question requested the respondents to rate the level of girls' education in Gashua community. Table 3 below shows the analyses of the responses given by the respondents on this.

**Table 3: Rating of girls' education in Gashua**

| Rating    | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Excellent | 8         | 16.0       |
| Very Good | 22        | 44.0       |
| Good      | 17        | 34.0       |
| Fair      | 3         | 6.0        |
| Poor      | NIL       | NIL        |
| Very poor | NIL       | NIL        |
| Total     | 100       | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021.

The analyses from the table above show that 8 respondents (16.0%) rated the education of girls in Gashua community to be excellent; 22 respondents (44.0%) rated it to be very good; 17 respondents (34.0%) rated it to be good and 3 respondents (6.0%) opined it to be fair. No respondent rated it to be poor or very poor.

The in-depth interview analyses from the qualitative data obtained from the senior secondary school girls also supported and complimented the quantitative data analyzed in the above table 3.

The excerpts below show that girls' education in Gashua community is far better when compared with that of the boys:

*Girls are better off in education than boys in Gashua community. Girls are more studious in their education than the boys. Girls love education than boys. Boys are not inclined to education like girls in Gashua community.*

IDI/Number 5/SSS 3/ 09-04-2021

*The education of the girls in Gashua community is far better than that of the boys. Boys prefer to go into business to schooling. Hence, the education of girls is better.*

IDI/ Number 4/ SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Another respondent also concurred thus:

*Female education is better in Gashua than the male education because girls are brilliant than boys. Boys do not normally complete their education because they usually dropout of school to start business.*

IDI/ Number 6/ SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another respondent also gave a similar reason:

*The girls' education is better than the boys' education because it is only girls that have zeal for schooling. Boys are not inclined to education. Girls take their studies with ultimate seriousness than boys.*

IDI/ Number 7/ SSS 1/ 12-04-2021

Another respondent gave another point:

*Girls' education is better than the boys' education. There are many girls' schools than the mixed schools in Gashua community which gives girls opportunity ahead of boys.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another respondent rated girls' education as a better one as follows:

*Education of the girls is better than the boys in this community. Boys go into business rather than schooling because they believe without doing business they cannot get the means to take care of their families. Girls embrace education more than the boys because they want their own children to go to school also and be better citizens of the country.*

IDI/ Number 3/ SSS 3/ 09-04-2021

However, two out of the ten girls interviewed during the field work disagreed that girls' education is better than the boys education in Gashua community. The two respondents gave their reasons for this as follows:

*Boys' education is better than girls' education because some parents will not send their daughters to school because doing that will not bring any benefit to them.*

IDI / Number 10 / SSS 1/ 12-04-2021

*Boys' education is better than girls' education. Boys have opportunity than girls. Girls may go into early marriage and stop schooling but when boys get married their education will go undisturbed.*

IDI / Number 1 / SSS 1/ 09-04-2021

In order to compliment the rating of girl's education in Gashua community, a follow up question was asked from the senior secondary school girls interviewed. They were asked to compare the accessibility of girls to education with accessibility of boys to education. The following were the excerpts extracted from their responses:

*Girls have more access to education than boys. People in the community are currently giving priority to girls' education because educating a girl is educating a nation. Boys in Gashua community prefer trading to schooling.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS1/ 12-04-2021

*Girls have more access to education than boys because girls get more encouragement from community than they give to boys.*

IDI/Number 5 /SSS 3 /12-04-2021

*Girls have more access to education than boys because parents now prefer girls to go to school. Parents believe that educated girls will be able to encourage their children to go school and will be the ones to stay with children at home. Men will always go out, looking for income to take care of the families.*

IDI/ Number 3/ SSS 3/ 09-04-2021

*Girls have more access to education than boys in Gashua community; this is because girls are aspiring educationally than boys in Gashua community. Like myself, I want to be lawyer and build the community. Most boys do not have ambitions in this community.*

IDI/ Number 1 / SSS3/ 0-04-2021

All the above excerpts explained the accessibility of girls to education than that of the boys. However, three respondents had divergent opinions as stated in the excerpts below:  
*Boys have more access to education than girls because when boys get married they still continue with their education. However, the girls when they get married, they may not have the opportunity to go back to school again because their husbands may not allow them.*

IDI/ Number 7/ SSS1 /12-04-2021

Another respondent also supported boys' accessibility over girls but with different reason thus:

*Boys have more access to education than girls because boys are preferred by the parents. Boys will get jobs to do after their education but the education of the girls ends in their husbands' houses.*

IDI/ Number 10/ SSS 1/ 12-04-2021

Another respondent also supported this but with different reason:

*Boys have access to education than the girls. Boys can embark on business to support their education if their parents are poor. But girls may not have the same opportunity.*

IDI /Number 8/ SSS 1/ 12-04-2021

One respondent, however, asserted that both boys and girls have the same accessibility to education based on individual will:

*Both the girls and boys have access to education. It depends on individual will. Boys and girls who have access may not make use of it. But recently, it seems girls are making use of the accessibility than boys.*

IDI/ Number 2/ SSS 2/09-04-2021

The study also investigated further whether the girls interviewed or their friends had any challenge in the past regarding their education. Six out of ten interviewees said their friends had challenges in the past and that none was able to go back to school as a result of the challenges. The excerpts below illustrated their comments on this:

*Yes, my friend had experienced a challenge in the past, her parents forced her out of school to go and get marry at the age of 17 years. She eventually got married and never went back to school again.*

IDI/ Number 9/ SSS 1/ 12-04-2021

Another challenge was presented by another respondent thus:

*Yes, I have a friend who dropped out of school because her parents do not have money to sustain her education. She eventually went into business selling groundnut cake*

IDI/ Number 3/ SSS 3/09-04-2021

A respondent also gave her friend' challenge as follows:

*Yes, my friend had a challenge in the past. My friend loved schooling but her father insisted she must marry. Eventually, her father pressurized her into early marriage and never had the opportunity to go back to school again.*

IDI/ Number 1 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Another respondent gave the same challenge thus:

*Yes, my friend had experienced a challenge. She abandoned her schooling for marriage. She was not performing well in class.*

IDI / Number 7 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

A respondent also gave marriage as a challenge her friend experienced thus:

*Yes, I have a friend who had a challenge in the past about her education. Her parents forced her to abandon schooling for marriage. She eventually stopped coming to school and yet, she was not married out to a husband. She is now living a wayward life.*

IDI / Number 10 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Poverty was another challenge a friend of one of the respondents experienced which pushed him out of school as presented in this excerpt:

*Yes, I have a friend who dropped out of school because her parents were poor. She went into business and abandoned her schooling. She later got married and never had the opportunity of going back to school again.*

IDI / Number 2 / SSS 2/ 09-04-2021

The teachers were asked to indicate in the questionnaire administered to them, to indicate their awareness of challenges against girls' education in Gashua community. Table 4 below shows the analyses of their responses.

**Table 4: Awareness of challenges against girls' education**

| Level of awareness | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Very aware         | 12        | 24.0       |
| Aware              | 30        | 60.0       |
| Not aware          | 8         | 16.0       |
| Total              | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021

The analyses from above table show that 12 respondents (24.0%) were very aware of the challenges against girls' education in Gashua community, 30 respondents (60.0%) were also aware. However, 8 respondents (16.0%) were not aware of any challenges against girls' education in Gashua community. It can be inferred from the analyses that majority of respondents were quite aware that girls' education in Gashua community has challenges.

This next question requested the teachers to say whether gender discrimination against girl child can cause dropout such a girl child from school level. Table 5 below contains the analyses of their responses as extracted from questionnaire.

**Table 5: Discrimination against a girl child causes school dropout**

| Response          | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 6         | 12.0       |
| Agree             | 25        | 50.0       |
| Disagree          | 15        | 30.0       |
| Strongly disagree | 4         | 8.0        |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021

A cursory look at the table shows that 6 respondents (12.0%) strongly agreed that discrimination against a girl child can cause school dropout for the affected girl. 25 respondents (50.0%) of the respondents also agreed with the same. However, 15 respondents (30.0%) disagreed with the statement; while 4 respondents (8.0%) strongly disagreed.

It can be concluded that large number of the respondents believed that the discrimination against girl child can cause the girl to drop out of school. However, there may be intervening variables which link discrimination against girl child with school dropout. Future researchers may possibly proffer such intervening variables. The parental negative influence featured in the study. Table 6 presents the analyses on this.

**Table 6: Parental negative influence causes school dropout for girls**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 17        | 34.0       |
| Agree             | 27        | 54.0       |
| Disagree          | 3         | 6.0        |
| Strongly disagree | 3         | 6.0        |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021

A perusal at the above table clearly shows that 17 respondents (34.0%) strongly agreed that parental negative influence can cause school dropout for girls. 27 respondents (54.0%) also agreed with the same statement. However, 3 respondents (6.0%) disagreed with this statement and another 3 respondents (6.0%) strongly disagreed with the same. The analyses clearly show that majority of the respondents believed parental negative influence can cause dropout in girls' education. The qualitative analyses presented earlier

on regarding the experiences girls had in their education show that parents can negatively influence their daughters to stop schooling. In the analyses majority of the friends of the interviewees dropped out from school because their parents wanted them to get marry early. This is a clear indication that such parental negative influence can cause dropout for girls' education.

The study investigated whether hawking of goods by senior secondary school girls may cause them to drop out of school. Table 7 shows the opinions of respondents on this.

**Table 7: Hawking of goods can cause girls to drop out of school**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 10        | 20.0       |
| Agree             | 28        | 56.0       |
| Disagree          | 7         | 14.0       |
| Strongly disagree | 5         | 10.0       |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

**Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021**

Analyses from the above table show that 10 respondents (20.0%) strongly agreed that hawking of goods by school girls can cause school dropout for such girls. 28 respondents (56.0%) also agreed with the same statement. However, 7 respondents (14.0%) disagreed; while 5 respondents (10.0%) strongly disagreed.

A total of 76.0% of the respondents supported the statement that hawking can cause dropout for girls who engaged in it. The qualitative interviews had with the senior secondary school girls also show that hawking goods can causes dropout for girls. The excerpts below from the interviews conducted asserted to this:

*Yes, hawking of goods can make girls to drop out of school. Hawking may not permit enough time for girls to read their books or do their school assignments. Parents may also contribute to this. Hence, when they do not have time to study, they may be frustrated out of school.*

IDI/ Number 7/ SSS 1/ 12-04-2021

Another excerpt explains thus:

*Yes, hawking of goods can cause dropout for girls. Some parents are very selfish because they prefer profits from goods their daughters hawk for them to educating them. Even, some parents will not send their daughters to Islamic schools so that their daughters can hawk for them.*

IDI/ Number 10 /SSS 1 /12-04-2021

Another excerpt gave the same thus:

*Yes, hawking can cause drop out for school girls. Hawking may not allow girls to concentrate on their studies. Their minds may be fixed on the wares they hawk and this will affect their studies. Profits from the goods they hawk may entice them and tempt them to forsake schooling.*

IDI / Number 8 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another excerpt illustrates thus:

*Hawking of goods in my own opinion can make some girls to drop out of school. Some girls do not have money or support from their parents. Hence, they go out to hawk goods. This may affect their schoolings.*

IDI / Number 6 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

A quick check out at the interviews had with senior secondary school girls show that six (6) out of ten (10) interviewed were of the opinion that hawking of goods cannot, in anyway, cause drop out for the girls engaging in it. Some of the excerpts below show their opinion:

*No, hawking cannot cause dropout for girls engaging in it. Even, some parents do not allow their daughters to hawk in the morning when they suppose to be in schools, learning. Hawking can be done after the school hours.*

IDI / Number 5 / SSS3 / 09-04-2021

*No, hawking cannot drop girls out of school. There is time for schooling, there is time for hawking. One does not disturb other; I sell food in the market for my mother and late in the evening I will read my books.*

IDI / Number 2 / SSS 2 / 09-04-2021

*No, hawking cannot cause girls to drop out of school. I hawk goods also, but that does not affect or cause me to drop out of school because my education is my first priority. Hawking is secondary.*

IDI / Number 3 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Finally, one interviewee asserted also that hawking cannot cause drop out but the girls who do not hawk goods may perform better than those who hawk goods. She explains thus:

*No, hawking cannot stop girls from schooling. Girls can hawk goods after school hours. Time to go to school should be separated from time to hawk goods. Girls should schedule their time very well. However, girls who do not hawk goods usually perform better than girls who hawk goods in their studies.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

In the questionnaire administered among teachers, it was requested that they give opinions whether domestic chores may eventually cause girls to drop out of school. Table 8 below contains the analyses of their opinions on this.

**Table 8: Domestic chores can cause school dropout for girls**

| Response          | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 8         | 16.0       |
| Agree             | 16        | 32.0       |
| Disagree          | 20        | 40.0       |
| Strongly disagree | 6         | 12.0       |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

**Source: Researcher's Survey 2021**

The analyses in the above table show that 8 respondents (16.0%) strongly agreed that domestic chores can make girls to drop out of school; 16 respondents (32.0%) agreed with the same statement. However, 20 respondents (40.0%) disagreed with the statement and 6 respondents (12.0%) strongly disagree. A cursory look at the table shows that many of the respondents did not believe or opine that domestic chores can make senior secondary school girls to stop schooling. Complementarily all the ten (ten) senior secondary school girls interviewed during the field work opined that domestic chores cannot cause or make girls stop going to school. Some of the excerpts from the interviews are provided below to support their opinions on this:

*No, domestic chores cannot stop or drop girls out of school. There is time for domestic chores, for instance early morning or after school hours. What matters is the time schedule.*

IDI/ Number 5 / SSS 2 / 09-04-2021

*No, domestic chores cannot make girls to drop out of school. Some mothers will do domestic chores and allow their daughters to go to school. Some mothers will wake up their daughters as early as possible to attend to domestic chores before they go to school.*

IDI/ Number 7 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

*No, domestic chores cannot make girls to drop out of school or abandon schooling. Domestic chores, even if they make girls to go to school late, should not be a factor of drop out, provided the affected girls have the zeal for education.*

IDI/ Number 6 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

*No, domestic chores cannot cause dropout for girls at school. Girls should wake up early in the morning to do domestic chores before going to school. There is time for domestic chores and time to go to school.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Religious teachings that are erroneous were also considered as factors that can derail the education of girls.

Some religious leaders were known to be against education of girls in the society. The teachers who participated in the quantitative aspect of the study (through questionnaire) gave their candid opinions on this statement. Table 9 shows the analyses of their opinions.

**Table 9: Misleading religious teaching can cause school drop out for girls**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 12        | 24.0       |
| Agree             | 21        | 42.0       |
| Disagree          | 11        | 22.0       |
| Strongly disagree | 6         | 12.0       |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

**Source: Researcher's Survey 2021**

A glance at the above table shows that 12 respondents (24.0%) strongly agreed that misleading religious teachings can make girls to drop out from school; 21 respondents (42.0%) agreed with the same statement. However, 11 respondents (22.0%) disagreed and 6 respondents (12.0%) strongly disagreed with the statement. It can be inferred that majority of respondents were of the opinion that misleading religious teaching by some religious leaders can cause girls to drop out of school.

The senior secondary school girls interviewed also gave their opinions on misleading religious teaching and the possibility of making girls drop out were represented in the excerpts below:

*Yes, some parents may not allow their daughters to continue schooling as a result of misleading Islamic teachings. Some parents may be influenced by some clergies that their daughters will be converted to Christianity or sexually molested, if they allow their daughters to go to school. Hence if the girls do not have trust in themselves or parents do not have trust in their daughters, the girls affected may not be able to continue their schooling.*

IDI/ Number 2 / SSS 2 / 09-04-2021

*Yes, religious leaders can mislead girls to drop out of school because some religious leaders do think that western education will spoil girls, therefore, they prefer sending their daughters to Islamic schools instead of western schools.*

IDI/ Number 3 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Another respondent corroborated the above opinion thus:

*Yes, many Islamic scholars will not allow their daughters to go school, especially the Christian missionary schools, thinking that their daughters may be converted to Christianity. Hence, if influence of Christianity is being exercised on girls in school, parents may force them out of school.*

IDI/ Number 1 / SSS 3/ 09-04-2021

Another opinion from another respondent supported the above excerpt thus:

*Yes religious teachings can discourage girls from completing their education. I have many friends that did not complete their education because their parents prefer Islamic education to western education.*

IDI/ Number 10 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Some girls interviewed opined that misleading religious teachings may not cause dropout in girls' education but however, adduced conditions to their opinions. These are captured in their explanations below:

*No, misleading religious teachings cannot cause dropout in girls' education, especially in the urban areas. Such is only applicable in the rural areas. Parents in the rural areas are usually afraid that the moral and religious teachings they gave to their daughters may be eroded by the teaching of western education. Moreover, there are many fewer schools in rural areas.*

IDI/ Number 5 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Another respondent spoke thus:

*I do not believe that misleading religious teaching can derail girls' education or stop it. However, some religious leaders may not send their daughters to school because they believe such daughters will become useless when expose to western education.*

IDI/ Number 4 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Opinion of another respondent is captured below:

*No, misleading religious teachings will not stop girls from continuing their education. Notwithstanding, some parents may be afraid and stop their daughters from complete their education because of the fear that having enough western education may likely make the girls to forget religious teachings. Hence, some parents prefer sending their daughters to Islamic school to western schools.*

IDI/ Number 8 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another respondent offered her opinion thus:

*No, misleading religious teaching cannot cause girls to drop out of school. However, some girls may drop out if their parents listen to such propaganda from such religious leaders.*

IDI/ Number 6 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

The implication of early marriage on girl's education in area of school dropout was also given consideration in this study. The table 10 shows the responses of the teachers who participated in the study on this.

**Table 10: Early marriage causes school dropout**

| Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
|-----------|-----------|------------|

|                   |    |       |
|-------------------|----|-------|
| Strongly agree    | 12 | 24.0  |
| Agree             | 26 | 52.0  |
| Disagree          | 3  | 6.0   |
| Strongly disagree | 9  | 18.0  |
| Total             | 50 | 100.0 |

Source: Researcher's Survey 2021

The analyses imputed in the above table show that 12 respondents (24.0%) strongly agree that early marriage can make senior secondary school girls to become school dropouts. 26 respondents (52.0%) also agree with the same statement. However, 3 respondents (6.0%) disagreed and 9 respondents (18.0%) strongly disagreed. A cursory look at the table shows majority of the respondent supported that early marriage can truncate education of girls in senior secondary schools.

The qualitative in-depth interviews conducted for the study among the senior secondary school girls also supported the statement and showed a strong link between early marriage and school dropout. The comments from the girls interviewed for the study vividly captured their opinions on this:

*Yes, early marriage can cause dropout for girls. Girls who got married may not come back to complete their schooling because their husbands may cajole them that education will not bring any benefits for them.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another gave her opinion thus:

*Yes, early marriage can cause girls to drop out from school. Many girls go into early marriage because their parents forced them into it. Especially, when parents discovered that they were becoming sexually immoral.*

IDI/ Number 7 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another girl supported the same:

*Yes, early marriage can cause dropout for girls, especially in the rural areas. But nowadays, early marriage is not common as such in the urban areas because parents send their daughters to school.*

IDI/ Number 2 / SSS 2 / 09-04-2021

Another girl also concurred:

*Yes, early marriage can cause school dropout. Girls who got married may not be allowed to continue their schooling by their husbands. Husbands may be afraid that other men will marry them if they allow them to go back to school.*

IDI/ Number 1 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Another girl interviewed gave her opinion thus:

*Yes, early marriage can stop the education of the girls. Some parents can force their daughters into marriage. But if the girls marry husbands that value education, there is likelihood those girls will go back to school. However, if the husbands do not value education, the girls affected may never go back to school again.*

IDI/ Number 10 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another interviewee commented thus:

Yes, early marriage can drop girls out of school, especially when girls do not have interest in education at the initial stage or when pressures come from the husbands they married or their parents.

IDI/ Number 5 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Another girl interviewed gave her opinion:

*Yes, early marriage can cause girls to drop out of school. Some husband may not allow their young wives to go back to school. But in few instances, some husbands will allow. My brother-in-law allowed my sister to go back to school after their marriage.*

IDI/ Number 6 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

However, some girls interviewed believed that early marriage cannot lead to dropout. The excerpts below were examples:

*No, not all girls who went into early marriage dropped out of school. Some girls went back to school after marriage with the permission of their husbands. There are many of them I know in this community.*

IDI/ Number 3 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

*No, early marriage cannot cause girls to drop out of school. Girls who are married can still go back to school if they have passion for education and their husbands give them support.*

IDI/ Number 8 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

The study also considered the implication of poor school infrastructure on dropout among senior secondary school girls in Gashua community. Table 11 below shows the analyses of the opinions of the secondary school teachers who participated in the study

**Table 11: Poor school infrastructure can cause school dropout.**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 8         | 16.0       |
| Agree             | 18        | 36.0       |
| Disagree          | 8         | 16.0       |
| Strongly disagree | 16        | 32.0       |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021

A perusal at the above table indicates that 8 respondents (16.0%) strongly agreed that poor school infrastructure may cause dropout among senior secondary school girls in Gashua community, a total of 18 respondents (36.0%) also agree with the same statement. However, 8 respondents (16.0%) disagreed with the statement and 16 respondents (32.0%) strongly disagree with it. In summary, 52% of the respondents gave their agreement to the statement, while 48% did not.

Critical analyses from the interviews show that 7 girls interviewed were of the opinion that poor school infrastructure cannot cause school dropout while 3 girls believed it can.

The excerpts below shows the opinions of those who said it cannot:

*No, poor school facilities cannot cause dropout for girls. It is not school facilities that matter but what we want to achieve in our education.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

*No, poor facilities cannot cause dropout for school girls. The primary aim is on what to achieve from learning not the physical structure of the school.*

IDI/ Number 10 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

*No, poor school infrastructure cannot cause drop out. School is not permanent homes. They are for a temporary time. Hence, poor facilities should not make girls to drop out of school but rather they should focus on their learning that will eventually benefit them.*

IDI/ Number 5 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

Another gave her opinion thus:

*No, girls cannot drop out of school because of poor school infrastructure. The parents that are rich can change their daughters' schools to better ones with good facilities.*

IDI/ Number 3 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

However, the excerpts below from other school girls interviewed show that poor school infrastructure or facilities can cause drop out:

*Yes, poor school facilities can make girls to drop out of school. Some girls may be discouraged by the poor standard of the school facilities. However, some may stay because of their strong interest in education.*

IDI/ Number 7 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another respondent gave her opinion:

*Yes, poor facilities can make girls to drop out of school. For instance, toilets that are not good can make girls uncomfortable and even cause infection.*

IDI/ Number 6 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Finally another respondent gave her own candid opinion thus:

*Yes, poor school facilities may cause girls to drop out of school. Even girls from poor parents may be discouraged by poor school facilities and as such forced to drop out of school. One of my friends dropped out from school because there was no electricity in our school.*

IDI/ Number 7 / SSS 8 / 12-04-2021

The study took into cognizance that lack of enough female teachers may discourage senior secondary school girls and cause them to drop out of school. Table 12 below shows the analyses of the opinions of the teachers on this.

**Table 12: Lack of female teachers will cause school dropout**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 3         | 6.0        |
| Agree             | 14        | 28.0       |
| Disagree          | 25        | 50.0       |
| Strongly Disagree | 8         | 16.0       |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey 2021

The above table shows that 3 respondents (6.0%) strongly agreed that lack of enough female teachers can discourage senior secondary school girls and consequently cause them to drop out of school. A total of 14 respondents (28%) also agreed with the same statement. However, 25 respondents (50.0%) disagreed with the statement and 8 respondents (16.0%) strongly disagreed with the same. The quick summary made on the analyses show that 66.0% of the respondents did not believe that lack of enough female teachers can cause girls in senior secondary schools to drop out of school.

Sexual harassment as a factor for dropout was also considered in the study. Table 13 gives the concise analyses of the teachers' opinions on it as a factor for school dropout.

**Table 13: Sexual harassment causes school dropout for girls.**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 18        | 36.0       |
| Agree             | 26        | 52.0%      |
| Disagree          | 4         | 8.0%       |
| Strongly disagree | 2         | 4.0%       |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2021

Going by the above analyses, 18 respondents (36.0%) strongly agreed that sexual harassment can make girls in senior secondary school to abandon their studies. 26 respondents (52.0%) also agreed with the statement. The analyses show that 4 respondents (8.0%) disagreed and 2 respondents (4.0%) strongly disagreed with the statement. A total of 88.0% of the respondents gave their agreement to the statement. Hence, it can be concluded that sexual harassment can make senior secondary school girls to abandon their studies.

Social exclusion of girls from some school activities was also considered as a factor for school dropout among senior secondary school girls. Table 14 below contains the analyses of the teachers' opinion on it.

**Table 14: Social exclusion of girls in schools can cause school dropout for girls**

| Responses      | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 3         | 6.0        |
| Agree          | 24        | 48.0       |

|                   |    |       |
|-------------------|----|-------|
| Disagree          | 17 | 34.0  |
| Strongly disagree | 6  | 12.0  |
| Total             | 50 | 100.0 |

Source: Researcher's Survey 2021

A perusal at the above table shows that 3 respondents (6.0%) strongly agreed that when girls are excluded from some social school activities, they may drop out of school because of that. A total of 24 respondents (48.0%) also agreed with the statement. However, 17 respondents (34.0%) disagreed with the statement and 6 respondents (12.0%) strongly disagreed with it. A total of 54.0% gave agreement to the statement that is social exclusion of girls in school activities can cause school dropout.

Lack of female role models in the community that can encourage girls educationally to prevent school dropout among them was also considered in the study. Table 15 below shows the opinions of the teachers who participated in the study thus:

**Table 15: Lack of female role models can cause school dropout for girls**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 21        | 42.0       |
| Agree             | 27        | 54.0       |
| Disagree          | 2         | 4.0        |
| Strongly disagree | NIL       | NIL        |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researcher's Survey 2021

A glance at the above table shows that 21 respondents (42.0%) strongly agreed that lack of female role models in the community can discourage senior secondary school girls and consequently cause them to drop out of school. 27 respondents (54.0%) also agreed with the statement and only 2 respondents (4.0%) disagreed with the statement. None strongly disagreed with it. In summary, from the above analyses, majority of the respondents were of the opinion that lack of female role models can cause school dropout among senior secondary school girls.

The qualitative analyses from 2 respondents among the senior secondary school girls also testified to the statement. The excerpts below show their opinions:

*Yes, lack of female role models may discourage some girls from continuing with their education. However, some may not be affected if they have strong individual or personal interest in education.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another respondent supported thus:

*Yes, lack of female role models can cause school dropout among girls. However, personal interest is more important than looking for female role models. Benefit of girls' education to the families and the communities should serve as pointers than the female role models a times.*

IDI/ Number 5 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

However, seven senior secondary school girls interviewed during the field work believed that lack of female role models in the community that senior secondary school girls can emulate cannot cause girls to abandon their studies. The three excerpts' below were selected to support their opinions:

*No, even if there are no female role models, girls cannot drop out of school. Girls should aspire to continue their education because of the benefits that are for them and their children when they become educated.*

IDI/ Number 6 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Another respondent had this to say:

*No, lack of female role models cannot drop girls out of school. When girls have strong ambition they do not need any female role models to look upon. Personal ambition is more important.*

IDI/ Number 2/ SSS 2 / 09-04-2021

And finally another respondent also concurred:

*No, lack of female role models cannot cause girls to drop out of school. Girls should only develop zeal and interest in education whether there are female role models or not.*

IDI/ Number 10 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

Poverty was also featured in the study as a factor which can cause girls to drop out of school. Table 16 below shows the opinions of the secondary school teachers who participated in the study on whether poverty can make senior secondary school girls to drop out of school or not.

**Table 16: Poverty causes school dropout among school girls**

| Responses         | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly agree    | 25        | 50.0       |
| Agree             | 22        | 44.0       |
| Disagree          | NIL       | NIL        |
| Strongly disagree | 3         | 6.0        |
| Total             | 50        | 100.0      |

Source: Researchers' survey 2021

A cursory look at the table shows that 25 respondents (50.0%) strongly agreed that poverty can be a reason for senior secondary school girls to abandon their studies. A total of 22 respondents (44.0%) also agreed with the same statement and 3 respondents (6.0%) strong disagreed.

In summary, majority of the respondents (94.0%) were of the opinion that poverty can make senior secondary girls stop their education. A total of 8 respondents among the school girls interviewed agreed that poverty can cause school dropout. Some excerpts below contained their opinions:

*Yes, poverty can drop girls out of school. Education cannot be done without money.*

IDI/ Number 4 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

*Yes, poverty can cause drop out. If the parents do not have money to pay for their daughter's education, some of them may drop out of school. However, some girls can go into business to get money for their education. I have a friend who went into business (selling of eggs) to raise enough money to sustain her education to prevent her from dropping out of school.*

IDI/ Number 3 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

*Yes, poverty can make girls to abandon their studies. If there is no money to pay school fees, especially in private schools, girls can drop out of school. Even in government schools, you still need money.*

IDI/ Number 9 / SSS 1 / 12-04-2021

*Yes, poverty can drop girls out of school. Parents that have been paying school fees in the past may not have money for school fees at a particular time and the school may not understand this. Such girls may be asked to stay at home by their parents.*

IDI/ Number 5 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

*Yes, poverty can drop girls out of school. For example, if parents cannot pay for examinations like WAEC and NECO girls affected may end up dropping out of schools.*

IDI/ Number 2 / SSS 2 / 09-04-2021

However, 2 respondents opined that poverty cannot cause school dropout. The two excerpts below contained their opinions:

*No, poverty should not drop girls out of school. Instead, the affected girls should have the means of getting income through business, so that they can support their studies.*

IDI/ Number 1 / SSS 3 / 09-04-2021

*No, poverty may not likely cause girls to drop out of school. Poverty cannot be a problem when girls have strong interests in education. Reliance on God's provision will also help girls from poor families.*

The study requested the teachers who participated in the study to explain some other challenges they thought can make senior secondary school girls to drop out of school which were not treated in the questionnaire. Having sorted out those who responded to the question, the following were the other factors identified in their responses:

1. Illiteracy of the parents
2. Lack of government schools for girls
3. Lack of enough qualified teachers
4. Lack of educational instructional materials
5. Lack of community mobilization on girls' education.
6. Unwanted pregnancy

7. Lack of department of guidance and counseling in schools.
8. Indiscipline among senior secondary school girls.

The secondary school girls interviewed were asked to explain what can be done to overcome the challenges confronting girls' education in Gashua community. The responses they gave were sorted out and the following solutions were extracted from them:

1. Encouragement of the girl's education at the community grass root level.
2. Proper counseling for the secondary school girls.
3. Adequate teachers and teaching materials should be provided in schools.
4. More schools should be established in the community and be made affordable for girls
5. Rich men and women in Gashua community should assist girls who came from poor families through money and scholarships.
6. Parents should be properly counseled on girls' education.

The following are the highlighted findings in the study:

1. The education of girls in Gashua community was rated to be very good, considering the highest percentage in table 3.
2. Teachers were quite aware of challenge facing girls' education in Gashua community.
3. Discrimination against a girl child can cause such child to drop out from school.
4. Hawking of goods or wares in streets and markets places can cause girls to drop out of school
5. Parental negative influence can make senior secondary school girls to drop out from school.
6. Domestic chores may cause girls to drop out from school (However, intervening variables should be sought for in further studies).
7. Misleading Religious teachings can course girls dropping out of school
8. Early marriage among girls in secondary school can warrant them dropping out of school.
9. To some extents, poor school infrastructure or facilities can cause girls in senior secondary schools to stop schooling.
10. Lack of female teachers cannot cause school dropout among senior secondary school girls.
11. Sexual harassment can make senior secondary girls to abandon schooling.
12. Social exclusion to a certain extent may discourage senior secondary girls from continuing with their studies.
13. Lack of female role models in the community may cause school dropout among senior secondary school girls. But eight out of ten girls interviewed held a contrary opinion. Further studies are needed on this.
14. Poverty of the parents will drop the affected senior secondary school girls out of school.

## Discussions of the findings

The study discovered that discrimination against girl child can create barrier to girls' education.

Darling-Hammond et.al (2020) and Ambreen and Mohyuddin (2017), stressed that girls grow up believing that they are inferior and this seriously affected their education. The finding in this study corroborated the findings in previous literature.

Parental negative influence was also discovered as a dropout factor for girls' education in the study. Tyoaka et.al (2014) argued that majority of the parents see girls' education as less important. Many considered the investment in girls' education as unprofitable (Okorie, 2017). Hence, parental factors count as vital elements of children (Kapur, 2018).

The study therefore, compliments the existing literature on parental influences.

Hawking of goods or wares was also part of findings among the factors which constituted drop out for senior secondary school girls. This supported previous findings. Angeila (2011) in Kainuwa et.al (2013) argued that impoverished parents often fell they need their girls' labour for additional family income. Raj et.al (2019) argued that girls in

Ethiopia missed schools in order to work in the markets, selling wares.

Domestic chores may cause school dropout among school girls. However, the study did not find a strong link between domestic chores and school dropout. There may be intervening variables that exist between domestic chores and school dropouts that may really make it a strong factor to reckon with in the future. However, previous empirical studies suggested that domestic chores can hinder girls' education. Bardely (2000) in his thesis, argued that caring for home by girls can affect their education. Ambree and Mohyuddin (2014), Sarkar et.al (2014), Kainuwa et.al (2013) and Kapur (2018) reported the same findings in their empirical works.

Misleading Islamic teachings about girls' education also formed part of the findings in this study. It was discovered that misleading Islamic teaching e.g. conversion of Muslim girls to Christianity through western education or negative influences of western education on Muslim girls were cited as reasons some senior secondary school girls had dropped out from school in the past or girls will not be allowed to attend western schools. This was in tandem with Daraz et.al (2013) that deprivation of women in the educational sector can be linked to religion. Sarkar et.al (2014) explained that conservative religious groups never believe in the concept of girls' education. Girls are deprived their basic right of education because of Muslim misinterpretation of Islamic values presented by some religious leaders.

Early marriage also featured among the prominent findings in this study. Early marriage was strongly considered a factor for school dropout among girls. It was in tandem with the previous findings in other empirical works which appeared in literature. In Kainuwa et.al (2013) surveys showed that parents of drop outs in India indicated that they

withdrew daughters from school when they saw education conflicting with marriage. Department for International Development (2005) reported similar findings.

Poor school infrastructure was also discovered as a finding. Large number of the teachers who participated in the study were of the opinion that poor school infrastructure can derail the progress of girls' education. Similar findings were also recorded in Literature. Kapur (2018) argued that lack of resources and inadequate infrastructure affect girls' education. Daraz et.al (2013) opined that physical and infrastructure hindrances adversely affect feminine education.

In a similar way Jamal (2016) argued that lack of adequate school facilities, especially in government owned schools impeded girls' education. Lack of female teachers was not a factor that can stop senior secondary school girls from completing their studies as reflected in the findings. The study did not see any link between lack of female teachers and school dropout among senior secondary school girls in Gashua community. Hence, their finding did not compliment previous empirical findings on this. For instance, Jamal (2014) argued that if there are no enough female teachers' parents will not send their daughters to school. Daraz et.al (2013) posited that lack of female teachers adversely affect women's status in education. However, future studies are needed to explain more between lack of female teachers and school dropout among school girls.

Sexual harassment was also a factor that causes drop out as discovered in this study. Sexual harassment can lead to frustration that can cause girls to abandon their studies. Darling--Hammond et.al (2020) argued that schools must be emotionally and physically safe for girls. Journey to school may be unsafe for girls and they may be physically and sexually harassed (Kainuwa et.al 2013). Bardely (2000) reported that girls are daily target of rape and assault. Parents, therefore withdraw their daughters from school has a result of sexual harassment (Sarkar, et.al, 2014). The finding on sexual harassment as a factor which causes school dropout for girls agreed perfectly with empirical findings in the past literature.

The study also concluded that social exclusion of girls from some school activities can cause a push out from school among affected girls. However, the link between social exclusion and school dropout needs to be established further. Sattar et.al (2012) argued that social exclusion is a strong barrier to female education. Wetton et.al (2013) also gave a similar argument.

Lack of female role models was also discovered as discouragement to the continuity of girls' education. Teachers who participated in the study affirmed this, even though most of the school girls who participated in the study did not see it as a big barrier to their education. However, Abass (2013) agreed that lack of female role models is one of the challenges facing girls' education. Female role models are very scarce as inspiration for

girls attending schools OECD (2003) in Daraz et.al (2013). The situation is even worse in rural areas (Booth, 2014).

Poverty of the parents was the most significant finding in this study. The data from teachers and the students who participated in the study confirmed this. The findings perfectly supported existing findings in the previous literature. Bardley (2000); Okorie (2014); Jamal (2018); Khan et.al (2014); Sarkar et.al (2014); Kapur (2012); Abass (2012); Mvendaga et.al (2014) and Department of International Development (2005) all argued that lack of funds and good income (poverty) seriously affects girls education across the world.

In summary, most of the findings in this study agreed perfectly and complimented the existing findings in other empirical works as reflected in the literature review and the theoretical framework presented in chapter two of this study.

### **Conclusion**

The findings in the study clearly show that the objectives of the study were achieved. The challenges that cause school dropout among senior secondary school girls were identified and discussed in the study. Moreover, the solutions that can be proffered to reduce the rate of school dropout among senior secondary school girls were stated in the study i.e. rich people helping poor school girls (through money and scholarship) within the community; establishment of girls schools; provision and encouragement of girls' education; counseling and parental awareness were mentioned. The findings on the factors of discrimination; parental negative influences; hawking of goods, misleading religious teachings; early marriage; poor school facilities; sexual harassment; social exclusion of girls in school; lack of female role models and poverty were the identified factors which cause school drop among senior secondary school girls. The findings on these factors supported the existing empirical studies in the literature. They were all consistent with the previous empirical studies. However, findings on domestic chores and lack of female teachers negate what were obtainable in the previous empirical studies. Hence, more researches need to be done on this in the nearest future.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are given based on the findings from this study:

1. There should be encouragement for the girls' education at the community grass root level. Stake holders in education need to create community awareness that will encourage girls' education at the community level.
2. There should be department of guidance and counseling in every school, this will assist girls in solving challenges that can likely cause dropout.

3. There is a need for adequate provision of teachers and teaching materials to encourage girls to stay in schools.
4. Governments, non-governmental organizations and private individuals need to build more schools, especially for girls and help to equip the existing ones within Gashua community and its environs.
5. Awareness on benefits of girls' education should be created among parents within Gashua community and its environs. Parents should be properly counseled on girls' education.
6. Rich and well to do men and women in the community should come to the aid of girls that come from poor families by giving them cash to pay for their educations and provide scholarships for them. The other areas they can assist are also welcomed.

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### Pictures Of The Senior Secondary Schools Where The Research Was Conducted



**PICTURE 1: Bade Model Girls Secondary School, GoniAji Road, Gashua.**



**PICTURE 2: AL Ansar Girls Academy, GoniAji Road, Gashua.**



**PICTURE 3: Yusad Standard Secondary School, Gashua-Nguru Road**



**PICTURE 4: Yusra Model Science Schools, Gashua-Nguru Road**



**PICTURE 5: Demonstration Secondary School, Gashua- Nguru Road.**