

Roots of Truants of Girl Students in Government Primary Schools of Rajasthan (A Case Study of District Kota)

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Abstract:

The core aims of the present research study were to study the factors affecting the educational development of the girl students and the scale of absentees of girls at primary level in the Government schools of District Kota, Rajasthan. This research was based on both primary and secondary data. The interview schedules were constructed for collecting data. The primary data was collected from teachers, parents, out of schoolgirls, administrators and focus groups. The secondary data was collected from government agencies, civil society organizations, existing research studies, newspapers, magazines and reports. The data was collected through random sampling method. Here some of the major reasons of girls' absenteeism at primary school level in rural areas of Kota:

1. Unfavourable attitude of parents. 2. Involvement of girl children in domestic activities. 3. Poverty of parents. 4. Gender discrimination. 5. Early marriage and pregnancy. 6. Violence against girls in schools. 7. Funding. 8. Child-domestic labour. 9. Lack of government schools. 10. Lack of encouragement.

Keywords: Government primary schools, Kota, Rajasthan, India, Girls students, Absenteeism.

I

Men still dominate women in every country in the world, resulting in widespread discrimination against women and girls. The impact of unequal power relations and discrimination is often felt most severely when material poverty exists, as this increases vulnerability. Inequality in society inevitably has an impact on the provision and content of education, as well as on the ability of girls to enter, and remain in, school.

There will be the several reasons for it, but we will focus on main problems of absentees of primary girls' students like Gender discrimination, early marriage and pregnancy, violence against girls in schools, funding, child-domestic labour, lack of government schools, lack of encouragement etc. Primary education in fact is that stage of education, which helps students to become competent and indispensable members of a complex modern education society. It is like a bridge between childhood and elementary education. It prepares young students

between the age group of 05 to 14 for entry into Secondary education. A latest report published by the National Sample Survey Organisation last year included a rather curious finding. More than 32 children out of 100 who dropped out of school in the

age-group of 05-14 years did so because they did not think that education was necessary. The number was almost double those who dropped out to supplement family incomes or attend to domestic chores.

Age Group	School too Far	To Supplement Household Income	Education Not Considered Necessary	To Attend Domestic Chores
5-9	4.10	0.5	11.20	0.8
10-14	3.30	16.1	32.30	13

Source: NSSO

School absenteeism in large scale hampers the process at not only good schooling but it also poses a major challenge to the children to successfully complete the basic cycle of primary education. The tendency and the circumstances of school absenteeism among the children are one of the important factors strongly associated with early dropout from the schools. It is also observed that the incidence of absenteeism or rate of absenteeism among primary girls' students varies across social groups depending upon their school and home factors.

II

There is a wide range of studies on the theme of girls' absenteeism from school education in primary section. Both boys and girls should have access to adequate education to enable them to develop their capacities for informed and rational choices and to have increased agency.

Researcher, literature review axis on the gender biases and inequality in elementary education. The central question is that why more girls do not start and stay in school in India, despite the fact that educational inequality has been singled out as a major infringement of the rights of girls and women and an important barrier

to social and economic development in both national and international forums. In 2006-11 it became the center of attention once more among policy makers, administrators, practitioners and the academia circle after the declaration of the Millennium Development Goals. The decade since then has witnessed a significant increase in the importance accorded to education, especially the education of girls, at international, regional as well as national levels, with arguments being made for increasing financial investment and policy focus on education provision.

The equal opportunities approach dominated the field of gender and education in 1990s, with its concern for equal rights, equal access and participation; freedom of choice and the removal of sex discrimination. Much of the early work on girls' schooling in developing countries relied heavily on quantitative procedures. *Unterhalter* argues included household members' characteristics and possessions, infrastructure, school provision and management, neglecting the school processes and educational outcomes. However, there has been a trend shift with more focus being given to women's empowerment through education from the turn to the twenty-first century. Thus, in brief a crucial aspect of the 'gender and

education' is achieving gender equality in education.

The current discourse on gender and development focuses on providing agency to enhance female wellbeing. *Sen* believes that female wellbeing could be improved by increasing their participation in public-sphere activities. It is argued that girls' participation in education will improve national development indicators such as lower infant and maternal mortality, lower fertility rates, longer life expectancy, improvement in conditions of health, nutrition and economic growth. The emphasis on increasing facilities for girls' schooling to maximize social benefits came to the fore and the personal and private benefits of girls' and women education remained unacknowledged. In India another study was conducted on Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh showed that 17% students were absent from schools. 20% of present students were not present in classes. Another study conducted on the North West Frontier Province in India presented the facts that absent rate of school students were there 18%. A study held by World Bank in India in the mid-1990s showed that 50 % students were absent frequently (Bank, 2001). It discovered that absent ratio of students in India was found 25% during unannounced visits to a nationally representative sample of government primary schools. Absent rate was less where inspection was done regularly, have better infrastructure and were closer to the road. It was found out that in India absent rate among female students is greater than the male students. About 25% of enrolled girls and 17% of enrolled boys in government schools did not have students present in the school. It was found that those students who are appointed in their local community have less absent rate than those who come from outside the city or village. The developing countries are still struggling to put girls into and to retain them at school in the first

place. While focusing on the literature related to barriers of girls' education, researcher has also looked at the status of women in society, as perceptions of society towards girls' education are dependent in part on the status of its women.

The issue of education has been given increasing prominence in the development agenda of international organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, World Vision and DFID over recent decades. These agencies have tried to accelerate the process to achieve universal elementary education by emphasizing the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). *King and Hill*: while evaluating the status of women education and the extent of the gender gap in education in 152 developing countries spread over five regions during the period 1960 to 2005, found that the status of female education was at its lowest in the poorest countries (*King and Hill, 2008*). The UNESCO report 2010 provides further support for this. It suggests an even bleaker picture regarding girls' education in India. It argues that the fact that India has the world's largest number of out-of-school children has an enormous impact on the global level of gender disparities. India alone accounts for 23 percent of the global total of out-of-school children. In recent times, a growing number of studies have examined the factors constraining girls' education. Here the unit of analysis is the family and social relations. These studies focus on the cultures of the home and the school, while others include that of society and the economy.

Numbers of researchers and philosophers provide valuable insights into the importance of the household as "the site where key decisions regarding the education of children are taken". A growing body of literature has emphasised the socio-economic circumstances of the family as a main constraint on girls'

education. They point too low household income and the direct and hidden costs of schooling as the main reasons for the non-enrolment of children in general and girls in particular in school. The GAP report points out that the main obstacle that continues to undermine efforts to get girls into school is poverty. 'Children's participation in economic activities to improve the earnings of their family keeps them away from school'. Likewise, mothers' going to work for long hours necessitates girls' engagement in domestic chores. Girls are always required at the home front and play a critical role in the household.

The concern over girls' security dissuades parents from sending their girls to school if they have to travel long distances. There is a fear of "danger" facing adolescent girls outside the boundaries of their home, which pervades parents. Thus "control of girls' sexuality" becomes a major concern of families, and not their education. As is evident from the DFID report parents' security concerns include the possibility of girls being abused by male teachers and male fellow students. Some studies have found girls to be prone to sexual abuse by teachers. Harassment of girls by fellow male students is one of the reasons to deterrent to girls' schooling.

III

The interview schedules were constructed for collecting data. This

research was based on both primary and secondary data. In primary data Using closed ended Questionnaire methods in the interview schedules. Questionnaire consists of multiple-choice questions, which are easy to understand. Interview schedules were constructed for collecting data from teachers, parents, out of schoolgirls, administrators and focus groups. An observation schedule was also being designed to gather data on social conditions and teaching-learning conditions. Relevant statistical tools were also be utilized to make a litmus test of hypothesis.

The secondary data was collected from government agencies, civil society organizations, existing research studies, newspapers, magazines and reports. The data was collected through random sampling method. The sample size 200, which consist of girl children, mothers, fathers, administrative officer and villagers, was selected from rural areas of District Kota. Statistical Tools & Techniques:

1. Likert Scale: 5 Scale questionnaires were designed, and it has been analysed by using graphical method and percentage analysis.
2. Chi-square Test has been applied to test the hypothesis.
3. Graphical Method and Percentage Method.

IV

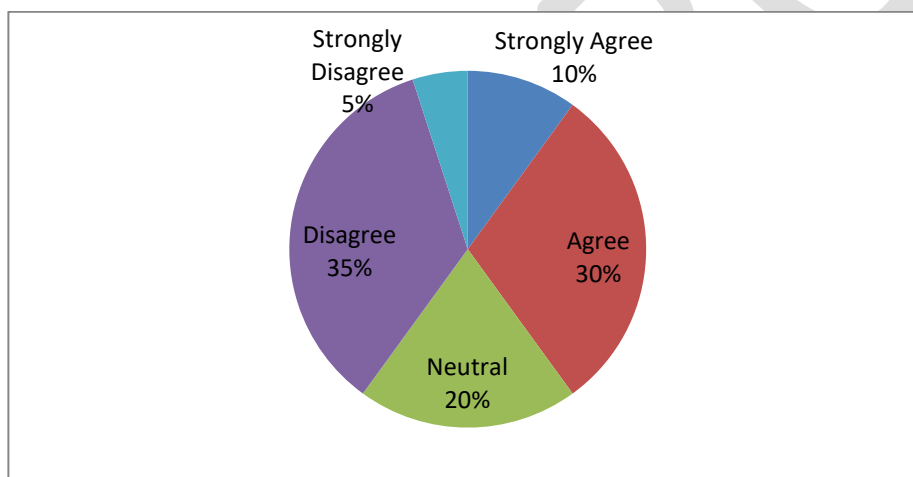
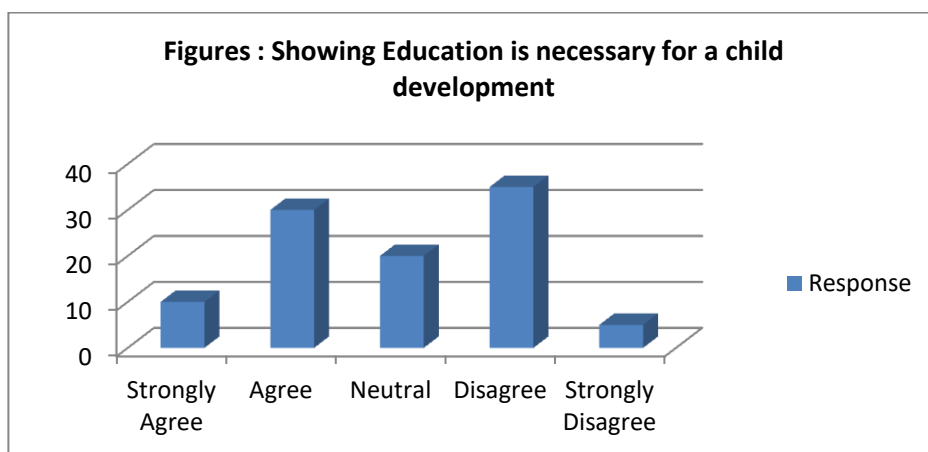
Data analysis based on questioner are as following: -

Response Sheet: Views of Interviewed Persons

1. Education is necessary for a child development (Table No. 01)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	10	10
Agree	30	30

Neutral	20	20
Disagree	35	35
Strongly Disagree	5	5

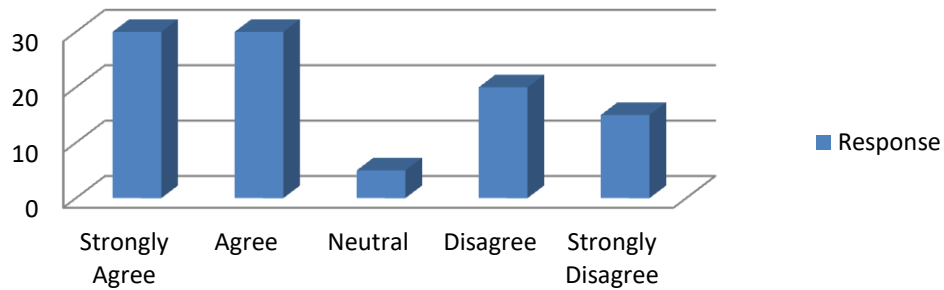


Interpretation: 10% strongly agreed, 30% agreed, 20% neutral and 35% disagreed, the above figure shows that villagers have equal opinion about education of girl.

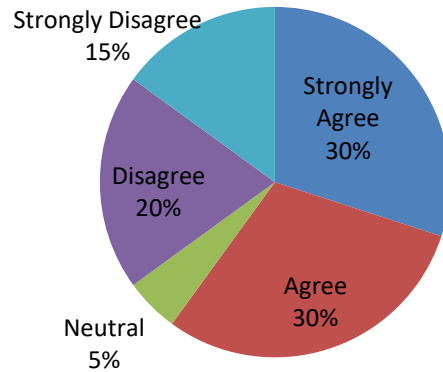
2. Learning domestic work is more necessary for the girl child instead of going to school (Table No. 02)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	30	30
Agree	30	30
Neutral	5	5
Disagree	20	20
Strongly Disagree	15	15

Figures: Showing Learning domestic work is more necessary for the girl child instead of going to school



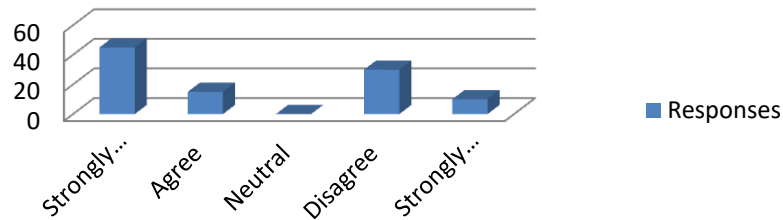
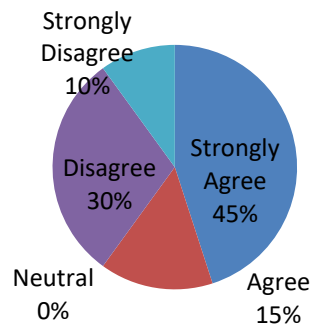
Pie Chart: Showing Learning domestic work is more necessary for the girl child instead of going to school.



Interpretation: 30% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed, 20% disagreed, and 15% strongly disagreed. This shows learning domestic work is more necessary for the child instead of going to school.

3: Sending school is not secure (Table No. 03)

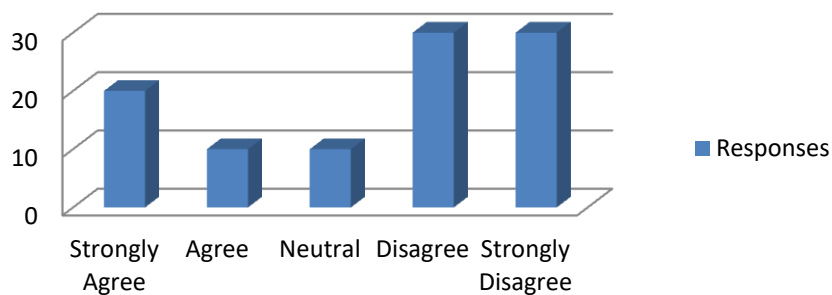
Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	45	45
Agree	15	15
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	30	30
Strongly Disagree	10	10

Figure: Showing Sending school is not secure**Pie Chart: Showing Sending school is not secure**

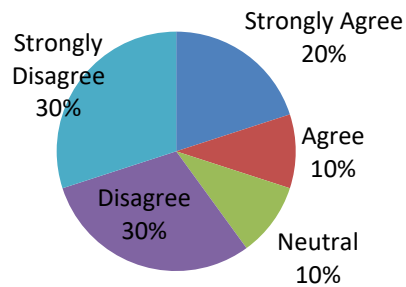
Interpretation: Most of respondents' i.e 45% are strongly agreed and 15% agreed that sending girls to school is not secure. Only 30% disagreed, 10% strongly disagreed on this.

4: Villagers are aware of the schemes sponsored by girl child education (Table No. 04)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	20	20
Agree	10	10
Neutral	10	10
Disagree	30	30
Strongly Disagree	30	30

Figure: Showing Villagers are aware of the schemes sponsored by girl child education

Pie Chart: Showing Villagers are aware of the schemes sponsored by girl child education

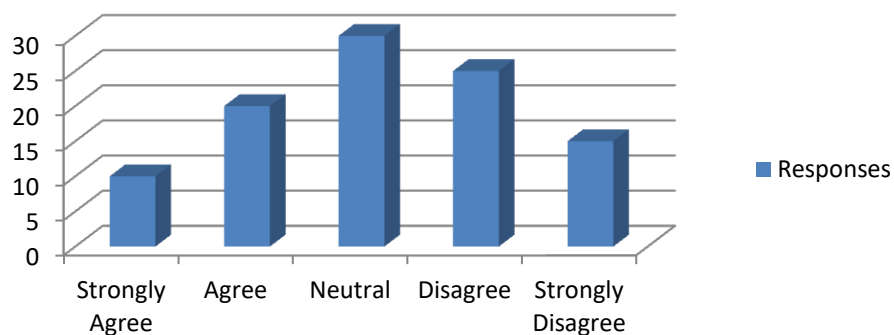


Interpretation: 20% strongly agreed, 10% agreed, 10% are neutral, 30% disagreed, 30% strongly disagreed which shows villagers are less aware of the schemes sponsored by girl child education.

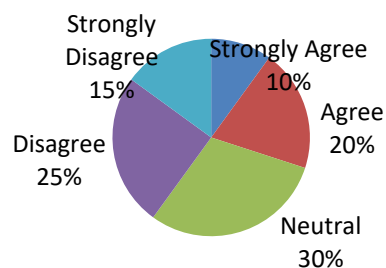
5. Village people getting benefited by the government schemes for girl child education (Table No. 05)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	10	10
Agree	20	20
Neutral	30	30
Disagree	25	25
Strongly Disagree	15	15

Figure: Showing Village people getting benefited by the government schemes for girl child education



Pie Chart: Showing village people getting benefited by the government schemes for girl child education

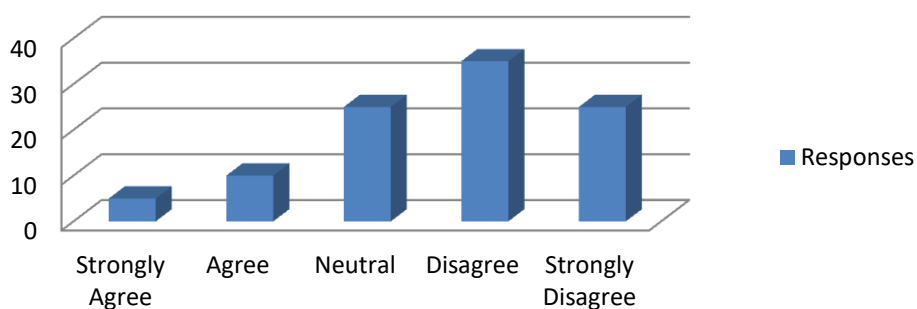


Interpretation: 10% strongly agreed, 20% agreed, 30% are neutral, 25% disagree & 15% strongly disagreed, thus few village people gets benefited by the government for the girl child education.

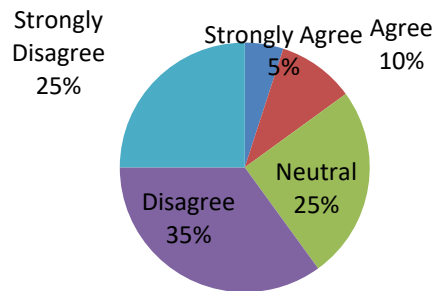
6. Financial benefit is realized by the poor farmers for the girl child education and for her nutrition.
(Table No. 06)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	5	5
Agree	10	10
Neutral	25	25
Disagree	35	35
Strongly Disagree	25	25

Figure: Showing Financial benefit is realized by the poor farmers for the girl child education



Pie Chart: Showing Financial benefit is realized by poor farmers for the girl education

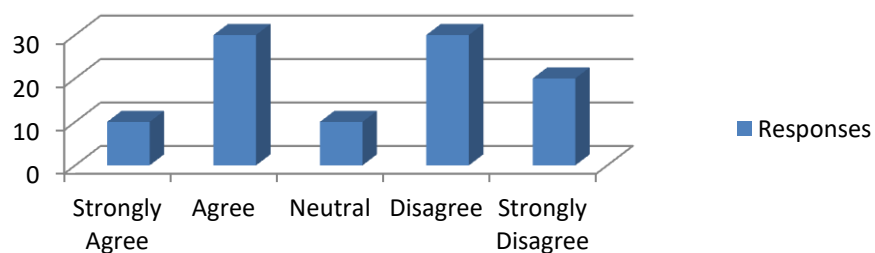


Interpretation: 5% strongly agreed, 10% agreed, 25% are neutral, 35% disagreed and 25% strongly disagreed. The figure shows that poor farmers for the girl education and for her nutrition do not realize financial benefit.

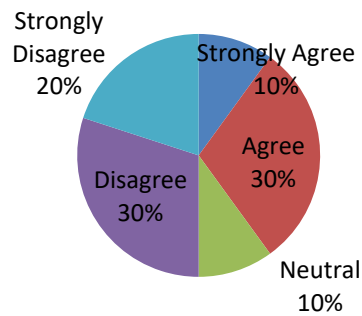
7: Proper help and counseling center helps in eliminating the girl drop out problem (Table No. 07)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	10	10
Agree	30	30
Neutral	10	10
Disagree	30	30
Strongly Disagree	20	20

Figure: Showing Proper help and counseling center helps in eliminating the girl drop out problem



Pie Chart: Showing Proper help and counseling center helps in eliminating the girl drop out problem

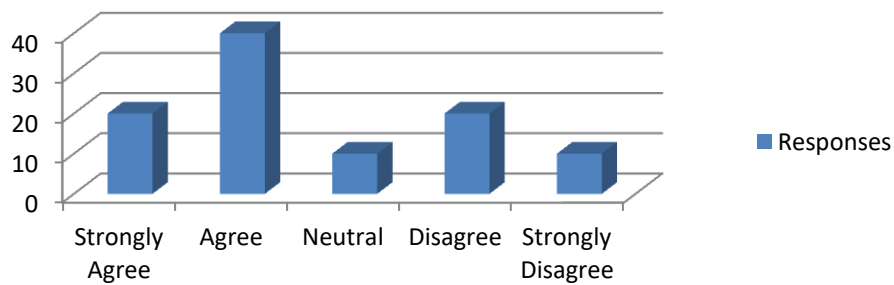


Interpretation: 30% Agree and 30% disagree showing that government help and counseling center helps in eliminating the girl drop out problem.

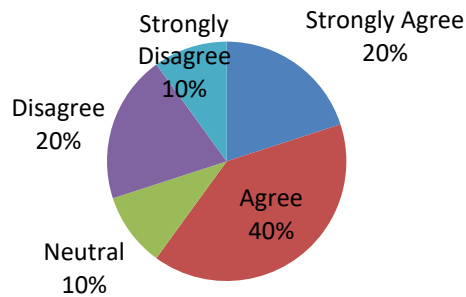
8. Early marriages should be stopped because it is hampering girls' education. (Table No. 08)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	20	20
Agree	40	40
Neutral	10	10
Disagree	20	20
Strongly Disagree	10	10

Figure: Early marriages should be stopped because it is hampering girls education



Pie Chart: Early marriages should be stopped because it is hampering girls education



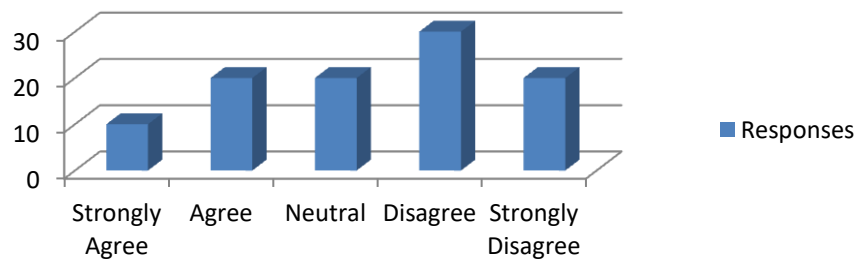
Interpretation: 20% respondents are strongly agreed, 40% agreed, 10% are neutral, 20% disagree and 10% strongly disagree on the above-mentioned reason that early marriages hampers girl's education and it need to be stopped by proper education to parents.

9. Village people encourages the girl child education

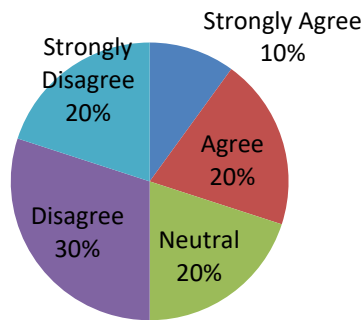
(Table No. 09)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	20	20
Agree	40	40
Neutral	10	10
Disagree	20	20
Strongly Disagree	10	10

Figure: Showing village people encourages the girl child education



Pie Chart: Showing Village people encourages the girl child education

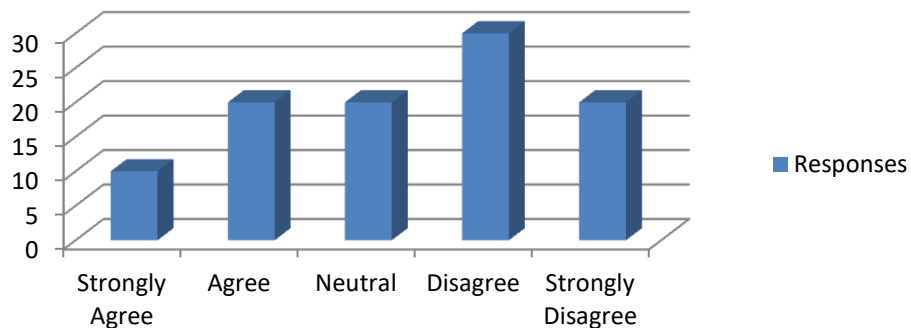


Interpretation: Only 10% strongly agreed, 20% disagreed, 20% are neutral, 30% disagree and 20% strongly disagreed, this shows that village people do not play a vital role in encouraging the girl child education.

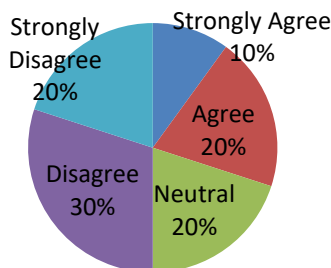
10: Government should provide more funds to the poor families and encourage the girl child education (Table No. 10)

Response	No. of Response	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	10	10
Agree	20	20
Neutral	20	20
Disagree	30	30
Strongly Disagree	20	20

Figure Showing Government should provide more fund to the poor families and encourage the girl child education



Pie Chart



Interpretation: Out of total respondents 30% disagreed, 20% strongly disagreed which shows that government role of providing more funds to the poor families doesn't have any impact on girls' child education. Only 10% strongly agreed and 20% agreed.

V

No society can claim to be developed without educating its children. Education cannot also be selective and should not cater only to the interests of few communities who are economically and socially rich. Since impendence the central and federal governments have been trying to provide education to all as enshrined in the constitution to provide universal and compulsory education to all children below the age of 14 years. In Rajasthan one finds a plethora of schemes. The need for so many has been arisen as a result of populist political necessity rather than a hard commitment to serve the purpose of educating all. Divergent schemes have brought divergent method of administrative control and management systems. These methods sometimes exert undue interference in the system including transfers and appointments of schoolteachers etc.

Out of many other problems one most demanding issue relates to the additional demands on teachers' time to perform several other functions than teaching, such as election duty, data collection during various surveys (e.g. livestock census and population census),

and participation in campaigns such as pulse polio eradication. However, in Rajasthan the regular schooling system has been unable to provide primary education to the disadvantaged groups of the society, namely the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, women and communities in remote areas. Thus, alternative systems have been devised to fill the gap.

The administrative and institutional structure of school education has been placed directly under the purview of *Panchayati Raj* since 1999. The aim was to decentralize the management and control in order to strengthen the ability of the poor and marginal groups to participate in local governance. It was strongly felt that the participation of the people could provide the best answer to face the challenges. In reality there still exists gaps in the performance of the PRIs, because of complex set of rules and regulations thrust upon by bureaucratic system of governance. Until the local people and the local governance mechanisms are fully functional without any interference the vision of "quality education for all" will remain a distant dream. India "Vision 2020" document states that successful population policy is directly linked to successful education policy. Success in

raising literacy rates and school enrolment rates while, reducing drop-out rates, especially for girls, are closely correlated with the delayed onset of marriage and childbirth, improved mortality for both mothers and children, and reduction in family size. In fact, a successful education policy forms the bedrock of all fields of national development- political, economic, technical, scientific, social, and environmental.

One of the concerns is about accepting a minimalist, functionalist, relativistic agenda for education. Increased education is essential for the empowerment of women. The empowering effects of girls' and women's education are manifested in a variety of ways, including increased income earning potential, ability to bargain for resources within the household, decision-making autonomy, control over their own fertility, and participation in public life. In particular, education increases girls' self-confidence, social and negotiation skills and earning power, and makes them less vulnerable to violence and ill health- all factors that exacerbate gender inequality and poverty.

Every school must be provided with adequate sanitary facilities for the girls. It can serve variety of purpose i.e. increasing enrolment, reducing dropout of girl children, developing positive attitude of parents towards education of girl children as well as motivation and enthusiasm in the mind of tender-hearted girls to join and continue in schools. Environment of classroom and school must be made attractive with relevant pictures, diagrams and events related to girls' education to increase girls' enrolment and their active participation in schools. It is essential to ensure safety of girls both in school as well as on the way to reach the school. Issues of safety and security in and around the school block the girls' attendance in school. Personal safety of

girl is a major concern, so parents do not allow girl child to attend school, which is far away from home. These community need to play a major role in protecting girls from violence.

Women organization must come forward to contribute in this regard. Community must be empowered through a variety of ways. Active involvement of community is the need of the time. Society needs to be sensitized and mobilized for providing quality elementary education to girls' children.

Again activities (Curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular) must be modified so as to accommodate girl children with comfort in our local schools. Teachers must be trained exclusively to develop new methodologies and implement health and sex education on variety of ways to make teaching learning process attractive. It is essential to make them ready for primary schooling. Improving the nutritional status of child is the essential requirement on the part of education of girl children as well as their mother. It should be followed by health care activities to develop the confidence of girl children in particular. Short term orientation programme for the mothers should also be organized during the local holidays and festival periods in the school campus or in the village community centers to provide information/awareness related to primary health, education of girls and roles and responsibilities of girls and importance of girls' education as well.

In general efforts have already been taken in various parts of the country on effective implementation of ICT through multimedia packages for providing education to girls as well as developing awareness in community towards need and importance of girls' education. It has the potential to generate dialogue between the teachers and taught. Aspects of multimedia

like print material, audio, video, radio broadcast, TV broadcast, teleconferencing etc. can effectively be used for reaching the unreached with quality support system. This can be used for developing positive parental attitude and community participation on educational programme for reducing gender disparity.

Here, researcher suggests the follows suggestions to improvise the overall situation and eliminate the girl drop out from the schools:

1. ensure universal enrolment and retention of girls in school and ensure the continued education of pregnant adolescents and young mothers in order to guarantee basic education to the girl child;
2. encourage all levels of society including parents, Governments and NGOS, to support the implementation of educational policies to enhance gender awareness in the community;
3. provide gender-sensitive training for school administrators, parents, and all members of the school community, such as local administrators, staff, teachers, school boards and students;
4. review teaching materials, including textbooks, to promote self-esteem of women and girls through positive self-images and revise these materials, highlighting women's effective role in society, including in decision-making, development, culture, history, sports and other social, political and economic endeavours;
5. develop programmes of sensitization on the gender perspective for staff of government offices working on educational aspects for indigenous and rural girls as well as educational materials, adapted to their situation;
6. identify the special needs of girls in difficult circumstances, including girls from migrant families, refugee and displaced girls, girls from ethnic minorities, indigenous girls, orphaned girls, girls with disabilities, and other girls with special needs and provide necessary resources to address their needs;
7. involve girls and their representative organizations, including girls with special needs, in the decision-making process and include them as full and active partners in identifying their own needs and in designing, planning, implementing and assessing policies and programmes to meet those needs;
8. provide training opportunities for girls to develop their skills in leadership, advocacy and conflict resolution;
9. Design different support mechanisms for teachers as a coherent whole, explicitly directed at improving pedagogical practice in the classroom.
10. Provide regular in-service training to teachers.
11. Bridge the cultural gap between parents and teachers through more elaborate forms of participation in the school's management and control
12. Arrange the counseling session for both parents and child in order to motivate them towards education.
13. Make the local bodies that take the responsibility of sending all the students to the school and identify the girls who really in need of financial support in order to meet out their other needs.
14. Child workers should not be allowed in the farms make the farm owner responsible for it and make necessary arrangement to punish such farm owners and the persons responsible who make the child to work for them.
15. Make the family understand that education is equally important for both boys and girls.
16. Assignment related to homework may be reduced to allow the girl child to attend school as well as

do their responsibility at their respective homes.

17. Local teachers should be made available for teaching in schools so as to reduce the problem of teacher absenteeism and improve punctuality
18. Special guidance cell may be opened with specially trained female guidance worker to deal with problems of grown-up girls at school and provide necessary guidance to tackle those issues.
19. Pre-school training centers' need to be opened in rural areas to attract the attention of parents and community towards education of girls' children.
20. make visible girls' and boys' unpaid work in the household by conducting research and documenting the gender differences, particularly in rural communities, and note the implications of household work for girls' equal access to basic and further education and career development, and take measures to redress imbalances, and eliminate discrimination.

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