



**INDRA GANDI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
WORK**

**FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FEMALE
STUDENTS: THE CASE OF DOLO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL,
DOLO ADO District SOMALIA REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this research project entitled: **FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FEMALE STUDENTS: THE CASE OF DOLO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL, DOLO ADO DISTRICT SOMALIA REGIONAL STATE, ETHIPIA** is my original work submitted for the partial fulfillment of the MSW to Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi. I do declare that it has not partially or wholly been submitted before, either to IGNOU or to any other institution.

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Certificate

This is to certify that Mr. Wosen W/Senbet who is a student of MSW from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi was working under my supervision and guidance for his Project work for the course MSWP-001.His Project work entitled, **FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FEMALE STUDENTS: THE CASE OF DOLO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL, DOLO ADO District SOMALIA REGIONAL STATE, ETHIPIA.**

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Acronyms

AAU	Addis Ababa University
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
FDGs	Focus Group Discussions
GER	Gross Enrollment Ratio
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HRW	Human Rights Watch
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
NAP-GE	National Action Plan for Gender Equality
NER	Net Enrollment Ratio
UN	United Nations
USD	US Dollar
WB	World Bank

ABSTRACT

In fact, academic participation of females has been increasing from time to time alike that of the total number of students. Yet, the share of female students at different levels of education remains lower when compared to their male counterparts. This has made gender disparity in education inevitable especially in secondary and tertiary education. This particular study aimed at investigating the major factors affecting the academic performances of female students of Dolo Senior Secondary School in Somalia Regional State. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The primary data were mainly collected from students through questionnaire and FGD whereas secondary data were collected from the school administration office. The study found out that attitudes of the surrounding toward female education, economic factors, as well as psychological capacity toward own potential were worth-mentioning when it comes to determining academic performance. In the case of the target population of this study, the aforementioned factors have negatively affected academic performance. The performance profile of those female students revealed that they performed poor when compared to their male counterparts. Thus, the school administration in partnership with other concerned authorities should work on awareness creation among the nearby society about the need for female education

Keywords: *Academic performance, factors, female students*

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Education plays an important role in nation building. In other words, it is perceived as a corner stone of economic development, social development and principals means of improving the welfare of an individual (Orodho, 2000). Education is considered as a first step for every human activity. It plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual's well-being and opportunities for better living (Battle & Lewis, 2002). It ensures the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. This increase in productivity also leads towards new sources of earning which enhances the economic growth of a country (Saxton, 2000).

Unlike growth which is determined only with the growing economic or wealth activity, development is about the overall improvement of on the lives of the citizens in the specific boundary.

Educating females yields far-reaching benefits for girls and women themselves, their families and their societies in which they live. The benefits of investing in human capital are especially pertinent for women in developing countries where equity in education is often lagging behind without educating, national endeavor can be less effective and the efforts women are weaker (Hill and King, 1993).

In this regard, with all the issues of development and growth, the role of women is significantly important because women share the half number of the population in most of our world. That is why teaching or developing women is the backbone of every development. There is a range of factors that effect on the female students academic participation (Waters & Marzano, 2006). A series of variables are to be considered when to identify the affecting factors towards female students' academic performance success. Identifying the most contributing variables in academic performance is a very complex and challenging job. The students in public schools belong to a variety of backgrounds depending upon their diversity. Unfortunately, defining and measuring the academic performance of female students is not a

simple issue and the complexity of this process increases due to the changing values of quality attributes associated with the different stakeholders' view point (Blevins, 2009; Parri, 2006). Keeping in view all these discussion researchers conducted this study to examine factor affecting academic performance of female students at the level of secondary school in Dolo town, Somali region, southern Ethiopia.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

It is well documented that all pupils admitted to the given grade of educational cycles do not complete those cycles with in a prescribed minimum period (Wanna & Tsion, 1994). In spite of the continuing effort that has been made up to now, studies show that Ethiopia has not managed to provide secondary education for all of its students in particular for girls. Therefore, it is unwise to think gender equality in education by simply counting the number of female students' performance of the secondary schools. Equality of sexes can be ensured identify and solve the factors that affect females' academic performance and thereby minimize female attritions. Some of the students' dropout before the end of the cycles and some of them repeat one or more grades before completing the last grade of the cycles successfully. In fact, the cause of these incidents can be various factors such as the existing situation of the district, distance from school, parents, poor economic, traditional perception and early marriage and so on.

Education is above all, a matter of socialization. The number of girls who repeat in the same grade is relatively greater than that of boys. Then, it seems that practically little has been done to find out the main causes that affect the academic performance of female students in secondary schools in the case of Dolo Ado District. There are many challenges that constraint women performance in senior high schools has been identified. Bello (1992) considers socio-cultural beliefs as the major barriers in this regard.

Thus, the researcher feels that there is a need to investigate in order to find out the root causes that affect the performance of female students in secondary education of Dolo Ado District. Hence, this study focuses on surveying and explaining the factors that affect academic performance of those female students.

Having a look at the available data, it was easily understood that the performance of male and female high school students at Dolo Senior Secondary School was not proportional, in the past four years.

So far, the available empirical studies on such issues were included. This study has undertaken assessment, analysis and identification of the issues mentioned. Hence, this study was conducted so as to fill the knowledge gap in the available knowledge reserve.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives the study comprised of general objective and specific objectives.

1.3.1. The general objective

The study is to assess the factors that are considered responsible for determining the academic performances of female students in hinder female in Dolo secondary schools.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To provide information based on the situation of the historical girls' performance and persistence at secondary level in Dolo district.
- To provide information to nature of female education in Dolo district.
- To provide information that affects education based on repetition and withdraw rate of them in Dolo district.
- To identify existing opportunities for female students to get better academic performance in academic activities at Dolo senior secondary school,

1.4. Research Questions

This study has dealt with gender gap issues in academic performance in Dolo senior secondary school. To meet the objectives of this study, the following general and specific research questions have been formulated.

- What hinders school age- girls from academic performance in secondary education in Dolo district?

- What are the major factors (school related) for withdraw of females in secondary schools in Dolo district?
- What are the main factors that affect the performance of female in secondary schools in Dolo district?
- What types of opportunities exist for female students to get a better level of academic performance and achievements than those of males in the School in Dolo senior secondary school?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study is supposed to play its part in assisting policy makers, teachers and other concerned bodies in figuring out factors that affect the academic performances of targets.

Also, the findings of the study are thought to be used as inputs for the school administration and the Education Bureau of Somalia Region State in terms of working on ways of improving academic performances of female students. .

Last but not least, the study is believed to play its part in initiating other in-depth researches on the subject.

1.6. Scope and Limitations' of the Study

This study is intended to assess the factors that affect academic performances of female students in Dolo Senior Secondary school in Dolo Ado District of Somalia Regional State. Attempt has been made in the overall study to figure out the major factors that do really affect academic performances of female students in the first cycle of secondary education (grades 9&10).

Despite its aspiration to give a glimpse about the major factors that affect academic performances of female students in secondary schools in Somalia Regional States and regions with similar socio-economic status, the study is limited to Dolo Senior Secondary School only and female students in grades 9&10 only.

Last but not least, it would have planned to go for more detailed inferential analysis tools like correlation and association had it not been for time and financial constraints.

1.7. Operational Definition of Terms

External Attitude- The thought, perception or test held by people around regarding another person or thing

Second Cycle of Primary Education- refers grades 7& 8 according to education policy of Ethiopia.

First Cycle of Secondary Education- refers grades 9&10 as defined by the Ministry of Education

Second Cycle of Secondary Education–refers grades 11&12 as to MoE

Sexuality- a gender based judgment and characterization

Psychological Capacity – the thought, perception, and strength one holds about himself/herself and their environment as well as the belief they have regarding how they can cope up with the environment

1.8. Chapterization

The study is consisted of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions of the study ,significance of the study ,scope and limitations .Chapter two focuses on review of related literature. Chapter three also deals with research design and methodology of the study. It discusses the description of the study area, study design, universe of the study, sampling and sampling methods, tool data collections and procedures for data collection, and data processing and analysis. The fourth chapter shall highlight the results of the study, their interpretation and discussion in the light of the findings of those previous studies in the world. Chapter five presents conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This particular chapter deals with the available literature on potential factors considered to have visible impacts on the academic performance of female students in secondary and tertiary education in general and that of secondary schools. In doing so, attempt was made to summarize basic theoretical and conceptual basis of academic performance. In the attempt to give a glimpse about the issue of females' academic performance and those responsible factors affecting it in developing nations in general and in Ethiopia in particular, the chapter also deals with background information through different reports in addition to going through the related works.

2.2. Theoretical and Conceptual Basis

The history of intriguing research and policy attentions towards gender issues in different sectors particularly in the education sector dates back to the 1950s. These days, the issue has become among the top agendas for different stakeholders including policy makers, donors, and women right activists among others.

It is widely accepted that the access and quality of female education at high school and beyond plays a vital role in the quality of life of the population within an economy. Kimondo (2013) considers gender inequalities and bigotry in education to be among the key responsible factors playing their part in the slow economic development in the continent. Similarly, Ikua (2012) argued that the need for education of females has a profound effect on national development as lack of their education results in socio-economic crises in the overall development of a nation; low birth weight, poor health and high fertility rates, poor family nutrition, low life expectancy, poor sanitation and high illiteracy rates among others. The overall idea of discussing the issue has directly to do with academic performance and the factors that determine academic performance.

Though different theorists approached academic performance a bit differently, this study would like to buy the approach Matthews et al (2000) as it seems to summarize and

incorporate other theories in the field. The theory approaches the determinants as ‘opportunities’ and capacities’, which also seem to be addressed as internal and external. According to Matthews et al(2000), academic performance is considered to be the functioning of the social and physical environment provided by the school(external environment), which may allow the person to use his/her, capacities to full advantage or alternatively, coupled with the capacity(Internal qualities such as emotional state) by the performer.

2.3. Gender Disparities in further education in Ethiopia

Though the available data regarding women participation in Ethiopia shows that the number of female students joining secondary and tertiary education has been increasing from time to time, the same data reveal that gender disparity in education especially in secondary and tertiary education remain an issue yet to be addressed.

Various literatures show that both access to enrollment and performance in education are reported to be characterized by gender gap and females are left underrepresented in all educational levels (Tilahun ,2013), AAU(2015), and UN women(2017)).

Emphasizing that role of education in creating a civilized society and promoting national development, Tilahun (2013) argued that the issue of equity concern in education should be a driving force to develop strategies and plan of action that could attract and encourage girls to participate in different education programs at all levels. However, the reality on the ground in the Ethiopian context remains far away from expectations. Despite the works done on the issue of creating equal erudition of females with males has witnessed some promising scenario, the disparity has remained visible as can be understood from reports revealing existing situations of different countries across the world. The gender disparity increases as the educational level increases. Hence, females remain under-represented at all levels of higher education.

The World Bank open data gender statistics seem to support the above claim. According to the report, the Gross enrolment ratio of females in tertiary education was reported to be 5 % only whereas that of the secondary education was found out to be 32%.

Apart from the aforementioned data from WB the data from Addis Ababa university registrar also indicate that the representation of female students decrease as the education level increases. The 2012/13 data show that female representation was 32% in undergraduate, 19% in postgraduate, and 2% in PhD programs.

Reporting that the GPI for girls in secondary education has witnessed increments from time to time (e.g. the GPI for 9th and 10th grades increased from 0.80 in 2009/10 to 0.94 in 2013/14), the MoE strategic document action plan of its part underlined that critical gaps are still there in terms of reducing gender disparity especially in secondary schools (MoE, 2017). Apart from participation, the same report indicated that the disparity remains there in academic performance too showcasing the percentage of female students that were able to score the minimum point to join the second cycle of secondary education (2.00 required definition of grading system of Ethiopia). The percentage of female students was 64 percent of the total female population in the school when compared to the 76 percent of that of the males.

In fact it sounds safe to draw a similar implication from the data reported by WB (2015) given that the numbers of female students that are able to complete secondary education and join higher education remain very few which indicates their academic performances among other external factors.

Despite the increasing number of female students being able to join higher education from time to time, there are still visible gaps when it comes to disparities both in participation and academic performances of female students when compared to their counterparts.

According to a statement made by the gender policy document of Addis Ababa University published in 2015, the narrative in terms academic performances of female students has not changed Underlining the fact that the academic performances of female students remain relatively lower when compared to their male counterparts, the policy document revealed that the attrition rate of female students has witnessed to be almost doubled to their male counterparts. The document further discussed that there are gender gaps in students' enrolment, performance and retention as well as in academic promotion, leadership and research and publication.

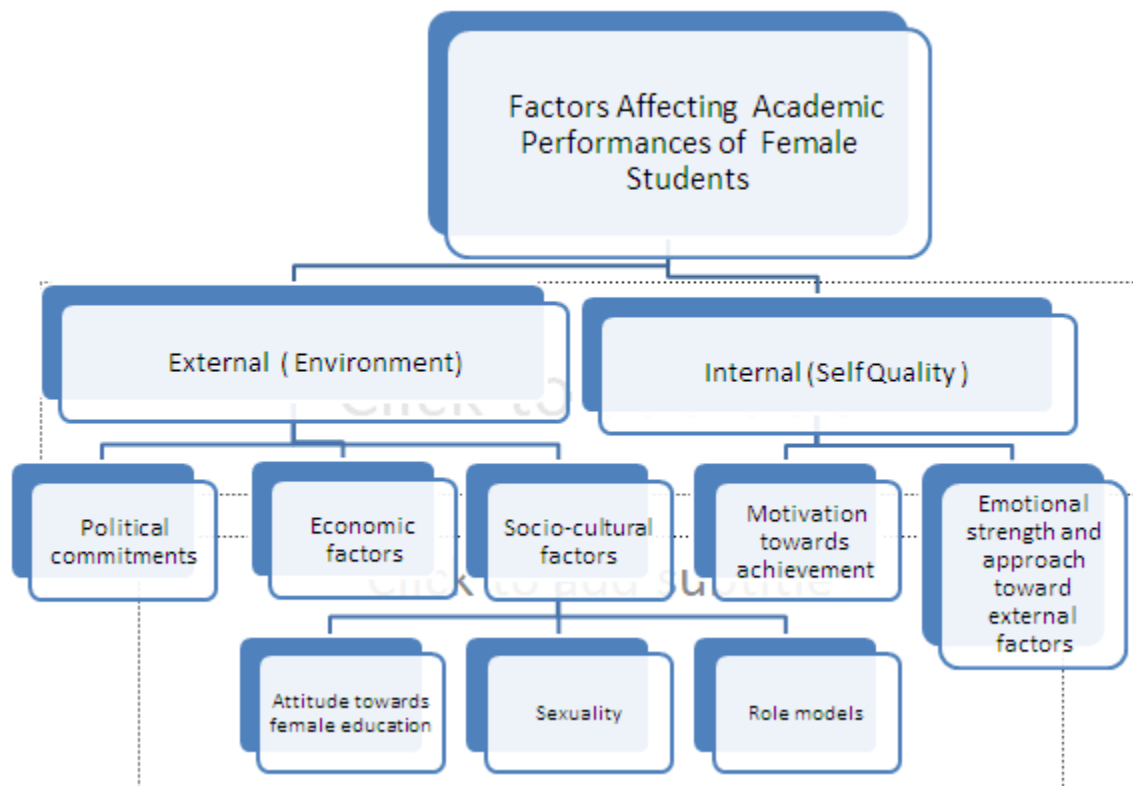
Yet, the contention made by Gretland et al (2014) sounds optimistic about the near future in terms of addressing the gender disparity in education. It considers the trends promising claiming that the impact of various initiatives designed are implications for the potential of the country to be able to reduce and eradicate gender disparity in education.

2.4. Factors affecting academic performances of female students

This part of the study tries to discuss responsible factors that are considered to play key roles in the overall performance of female students at schools particularly in secondary education.

Different researchers attributed the gender disparities to different environmental factors. This study has tried to summarize the available approaches in a chart as follows.

Figure2.1: Summary of widely accepted factors affecting female academic performances



Source: Own illustration, 2019

2.4.1. Political and institutional commitment as factors affecting academic performances of female students

The overall policy frameworks being implemented in a nation and the rules and regulations of the educational institutions are considered to be one of the key factors in encouraging/discouraging the participation students and their academic performance. Like that of the families and the surrounding community in the life of students, the school community such as school personnel including the school administration philosophy is believed to play a crucial role in determining the academic performances of students (Goddard, 2003).

Comesa (2017) emphasizes the level of influence institutional commitment that has directly to do with policy decision noting that the particular factor also affects the economic factor through allocation of economic resources that are needed to create a better learning environment.

Accordingly, different governments of the third world are striving to improve their records in creating an enabling environment for female students as part of their women empowerment packages. Advocacy works towards the need to reduce disparities through their socio-economic and political documents have been there. MDGs were worth-mentioning in terms of indicating political wills to do so (COMESSA, 2017). In fact, Ethiopia is not an exception in this regard.

Similarly the Ministry of Education has been trying to implement the policies through the internal rules and regulations of the educational institutions. These include but not limited to: making sure that the schools do have rule and regulations that protect the safety and security of female students, enforcing teachers' code of conduct, and enforcing the establishment of centers solely to support females' education within the institution (MoE, 2014).

2.4.2. Attitude towards female education as a factor affecting academic performances of female students

The quality of the educational system is considered vital in determining the strength of a certain nation. The quality of education system according to (Abdo, 2001) is dependent on social culture (SC) noting that the motivation and attitude of the environment matters.

Going through the available literature, one can understand that the attitude towards female education particularly advanced education remains to the disfavor of female students across various cultures in different countries particularly in underdeveloped nations. The available literature shows us that various parties of communities particularly in the third world usually hold a belief that women are supposed to be concerned much about being good wives and mothers and should get concerned with home management and not professional career.

Tilahun (2013) stated that various parents believe that girls should better be limited to household matters instead of attending further education believing that encouraging girls towards that end saves the girls and the families as well as the cultural values of the community.

The fact that female students do usually shoulder different responsibilities at household levels apart from handling their studies particularly in smaller towns and rural areas results in lower academic and limits their ability to perform at higher levels of education (UN Women, 2014).

In addition to the attitude of the community including parents, some researches indicated that teachers tend to carry the societal expectation of girls into the school. For instance, (Wamahiu and Nyagah, 1992) noted that teachers are said to actually discourage female students not to have aspirations to become scientists uttering statements like “Mathematics and science are not meant for girls”.

This seems to be supported by the report by the Ethiopian ministry of education. The recent data from the ministry of Education revealed that the percentage of females joining science in higher education remains 7 percent.

2.4.3. Sexuality as a factor affecting academic performance of female students

School related gender based violence has remained to be among the common challenges affecting attendance of female students (MoE, 2014) the report claimed that the violence come both from male students and the school community including their own teachers. The report by Human Rights Watch released in 2001 also underlined the seriousness of the act and the negative impact it has emotional needs of female students which in turn has to do with their attendance (HRW, 2001).

The finding stated by Fatuma and Daniel(2006) regarding sexuality assessment on its part emphasized the above claim. The particular study claimed that the more than half of the respondents involved in the particular study reported that teachers, that are male mostly, have a tendency of treating female students from sexual relation perspectives. In fact this study finds it difficult to agree that the finding of the aforementioned study can be representative as there are no other similar quantitative reports on the particular topic as far as this researcher is concerned.

2.4.4. Economic constraint as a factor affecting academic performance of female students

One of the gains of education is that it gives students the leverage to develop different skills including but not limited to problem solving and logical reasoning, which leads to development of professional skills and abilities (Ford, 2011). Yet, the leverage remains highly vulnerable to socio-economic backgrounds of the students/their parents. It is widely believed that students from a poor family or environment are highly vulnerable to experience lower academic achievements as their basic needs remain unfulfilled (Kapur, 2017).

In fact, poverty related factors are not exceptional factors affecting the performances of female students as they do affect the male students too. Yet, considering interrelated factors (Tilahun, 2013) argued that it is likely to disproportionately affect female students. The assumption is also proven by taking the extent to which a wealth index affects the chance of a male and a female student's enrollment. Kapur (2017) revealed that an increase in a wealth index, by one unit improved the chances of a male student by 16 percent whereas it improved that of a female student by 41 percent, which makes female students' enrollment more susceptible to poverty.

2.4.5. Nature as a factor affecting academic performances of female students

Biological factors are considered exceptional factors affecting academic performances of female students solely. Premenstrual syndromes are worth-mentioning in this regard. Gavin (2010) indicated that girls often experience emotional disturbances (bad feelings and irritations) during the beginning of their menstrual cycle indicating that the feeling may last for a week, which has directly to do with their academic performances.

Gavin (2010) further indicated that the experience results in absenteeism during specific days of the month, which in turn affects their academic performances negatively.

2.4.6. Internal capacity as a factor affecting academic performance of female students

This particular factor is entirely about how the female students react to the external factors and their capacity of dealing with external factors. It is mostly about psychological strength of working aggressively towards performing well even within the external pressures. In this regard, the literature part discussed under the 'attitude' section above seem to fight with this particular factor. The attitude of the others towards female education matters in the performance of female students. The attitude of the female students themselves about female education matters even more. Tilahun (2013) argued that females come at the forefront in terms of being exposed to mediocre lives simply because they underestimate the potential they do have. This in turn leads them to rely on others' distorted images about them instead of trying to explore their potentials to perform well in their academic life.

The findings of Fatuma and Daniel (2006) can be taken as a good input here. The finding revealed that most teachers tend to treat female students from perspectives associated to sexual favors. The particular study noted that the trend disturbs the learning process and the academic performances of female students. More importantly, the study claimed that it found out female students have developed a tendency of worrying much about 'petty things like looking good' so as to register competitive marks.

Similarly, Sengupta and Guha (2002) discussed about having role models to look up to indicating that not only their male teachers but also their female seniors do buy the discouraging attitudes towards female education. In this regard, it sounds logical to anticipate huge influences on the attitude of the female students about their own education. In fact, researches among the available literature hardly discuss the extent to which the attitude of female students is influenced by the attitude of other stakeholders in their surroundings. Yet, it seems safe to anticipate a huge influence in the attitudes of the subjects themselves.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The chapter deals with the overall research methodologies employed at different stages and under different sections. In this chapter, attempt has been made to show the overall process of conducting the study. It has been attempted to introduce how the study area looks like in terms of relevant variables such as socio-economic perspectives that in turn determine the performances of those targets. It also consists of the tools used, the sampling methods employed as well as the study design and methods. An ethical consideration has also been part of the organization of this particular chapter.

3.2. Description of the Study Area

Dolo secondary school is found in the Somalia regional State of Ethiopia. Found in the south eastern part of the country, the area is near to borders of two other countries; Kenya and Somalia. The people of the area do mostly earn a living by rearing cattle, trading commodities such as perfume and other electronic equipment mostly imported from the aforementioned countries with relatively smaller prices. Given it is located in the border where the government rarely researched; the area is also characterized by contraband trade. Islam is the dominant religion among the natives.

3.3. Research Design of the Study

The study has mainly employed explanatory research design. To address the objectives of the study, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used. This study used descriptive sample survey to generate qualitative data from students. Qualitatively, the researcher mainly employed a questionnaire of both open ended and closed ended questions and focus group discussions together with personal observations and document analyze.

3.4. Universe of the Study

The study was meant to investigate possible multi-faceted factors that have affected both the academic participation and academic performance of female students and increased the gender disparity rate in education as the education ladder goes up. In doing so, the study

considered female students in first cycle of secondary school of the school as its primary target population. The study was delimited to include female students in Grades 9 and 10 only that accounted for 410 numbers of female students.

3.5. Sampling & Sampling Methods

Among the total population of female students enrolled in the first cycle of primary education at Dolo Secondary School, the study considered an actual sample size of 205. In doing so, students were selected using purposive non-probability sampling technique. Then, the researcher employed simple random sampling method to draw the actual sample size from the sampling frame of the student population.

3.6. Data Collection Tools and Procedures

So as to gather primary data regarding factors determining academic performances of female students in the selected school, the study used questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions and focus group discussion guide. In addition, the researcher employed observation guide and document analysis tools whenever it was necessary. The document analysis for instance included the data regarding the size of participation of students for four consecutive academic years (2016/17-2019/20) particularly in three different cycles and the number of female students in those academic years.

3.7. Data Process and Analysis

Following the completion of the gathering of both the primary and secondary data, the data types were properly verified as qualitative and quantitative. So as to analyze the data, the researcher went for content and thematic analysis in the case of the qualitative data that had actually the dominant one. In the case of analyzing the quantitative data on the other hand, the researcher used descriptive statistics.

In the study has dealt with both dependent and independent variables in the case of the quantitative data analysis part. Academic performance of female students was the dependent variable whereas the independent variables included; literacy and economic levels of their parents any decision maker within the family they belonged to, attitudes of the surrounding, their own capacity to challenge external factors, sexuality, and institutional commitments.

3.8 Ethical Consideration of the Study

In the case of both the filling of the questionnaire form and sitting for a focus discussion, the respondents were given the necessary briefing about the overall purpose of the information they were asked to provide prior to the particular activity. Hence, they were well informed about the purpose of the information they provided the researcher and they understood the value of their information in the research. As a result, their participation was entirely voluntary and there was no form of incentive for their participation. On the other hand, any information resulting from the study was treated with strict confidentiality.

In general, ethical principle of informed consent, beneficence, respect for anonymity and confidentiality, as well as respect for privacy were applied in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION and ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This particular chapter is committed to presenting, interpreting and analyzing of information gathered through the selected tools as per the objective of the study. Accordingly, it deals with demographic characteristics of the subjects together with the trends in academic performance of female students in the school and then tries to identify the factors that affect their performance most.

4.2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Generally speaking, the demographic data showed that the great majority of the respondents were female students whose ages ranged from 14-16 years and belonged mostly to less literate families with lower average incomes.

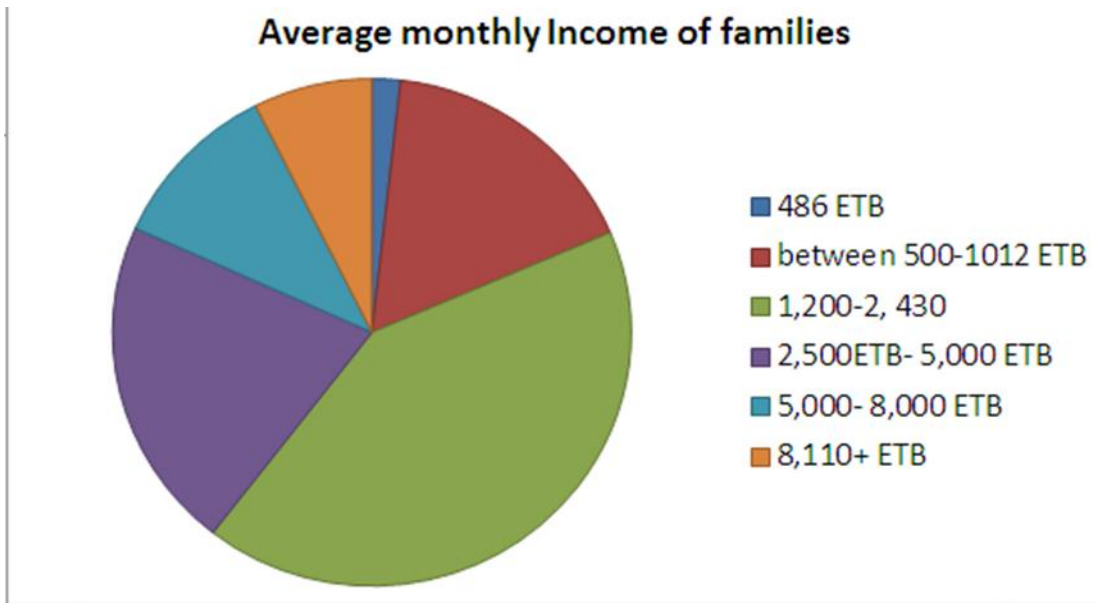
Table No. 4.1: Demographic information of respondents

Variables	Response options	F	%
Age group	<14	----	-----
	14-16	181	89.6 %
	16-18	19	9.4 %
	18+	2	0.99%
Education background of parents	Not educated at all	124	61.38 %
	Attended basic primary school	40	19.8%
	Attended Secondary education	31	15.35%
	Attended Tertiary education and above	7	3.46%
Average monthly earning of the family	<486 ETB	5	2.5%
	486 ETB -1,012 ETB	17	8.4%
	1,200 ETB – 4,050 ETB	129	63.8%
	4,100 ETB- 8,100 ETB	48	23.8%
	8,100 ETB+	3	1.5%

Source: Own Survey, 2019

As clearly seen under the first variable of the above table, the age the demographic information of respondents was highly dominated by female students under the age group of 14-16 (89.6%) followed by 9.4% from age groups 16-18 whereas the literacy of the parents were found to be dominated by very low literacy level. More than half of the parents 124 (61.38%) were reported not to be educated at all.

Figure 4.2: Average monthly incomes of the parents



Source: Own survey, 2019

Figure No 2 revealed that the economic statuses of the parents (decision makers within the family) of those secondary school female students surveyed. The majority of the respondents 129(63.8%) reported that the average income of their families ranged from 1,200 ETB to 4,050 ETB followed by the range from 4,050 ETB to 8,110 ETB accounting 23.83% of the respondents. Similarly, 2.5% and 1.5% of the respondents reported average earnings of the two extremes i.e. <486 ETB and >8,100 ETB respectively.

Regarding the response options listed, the researcher considered the international figure set to identify the rich from the idle class, the middle class from the poor and the poor from the poorest of the poor. Accordingly, the list considered 0.6 USD per day (486 ETB monthly) 1.25 USD (1,012 ETB monthly) as important lines followed by others. As per this

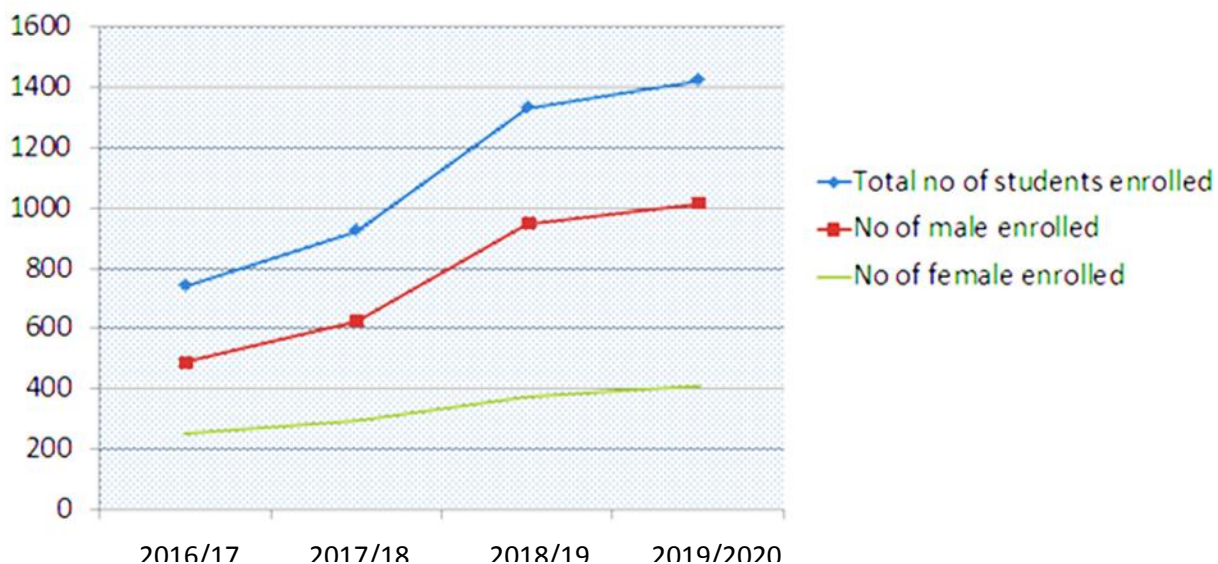
consideration, the majority of those female students belong to families that have earnings below poverty line.

4.3. Trends in Gender Disparity in the School

In fact, Somalia Regional State remains under the lists of areas of the country with relatively higher gender disparity in education. Dolo Secondary school is not an exception in this regard. The gender disparity seems even beyond the average of the country.

According to the available data, a total of 1,425 students were being enrolled in its first cycle secondary education scheme in the 2019/20 academic year among which Female students accounted 28.7% only (416). During the same academic year, the education participation share of female students in the second circle of secondary education scheme (Grades 11&12) was 24.85 % of the total.

Figure 4. 3: Gender Disparity in the first Cycle of Secondary Education at Dolo



Source: Own Survey, 2019

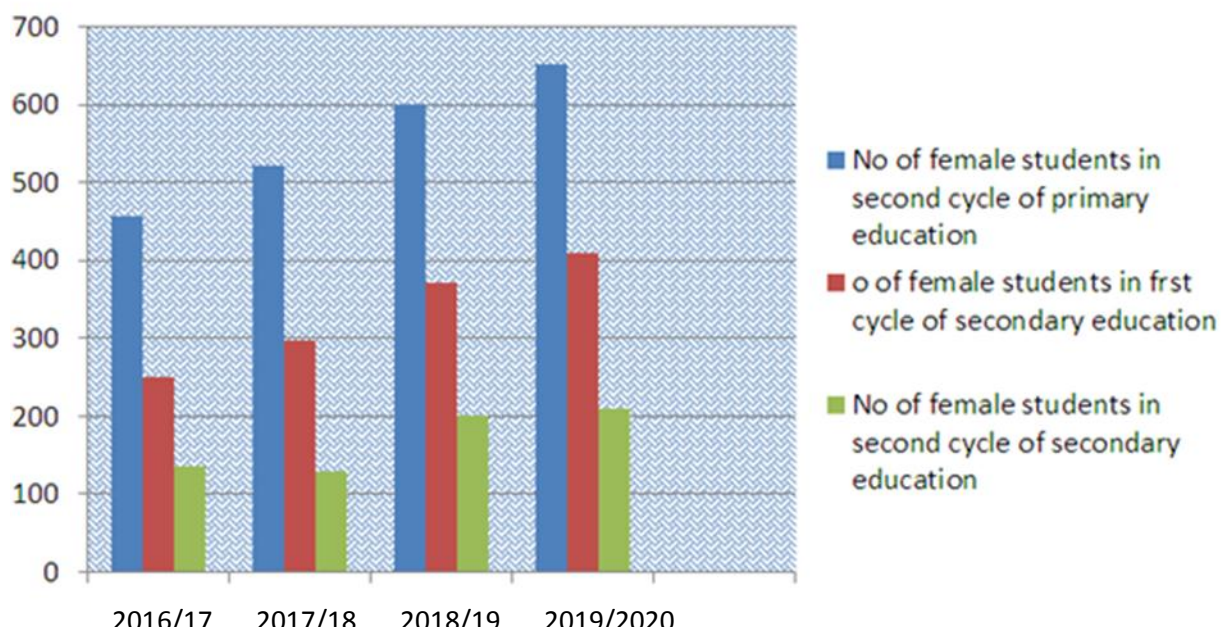
As can be seen from the chart above, the number of students being enrolled in the particular school has been increasing throughout time and so does the number of male students enrollment. However, the rate at which the two increased witnessed a visible gap. The data revealed that the gender gap in participation still remains there.

4.4. Academic Participation and Performances of Female Students at the School

The available data regarding the education participation in the school show that the academic participation of female students has been increasing from academic year to another with the exception of 2017/18 in which the number of students in the second cycle of secondary education witnessed a reduction when compared to that of the previous academic year.

In fact, the participation of female students in the second cycle of primary education (Grades 7& 8) and that of the first cycle of secondary education (Grades 9 & 10) is incomparable. The same trend works as we going up the education ladder. The education participation in the case of the second cycle secondary education remains very low when compared to the former two cycles.

Figure 4.4.: Education Participation and Academic Performance of Female Students in four Academic Years



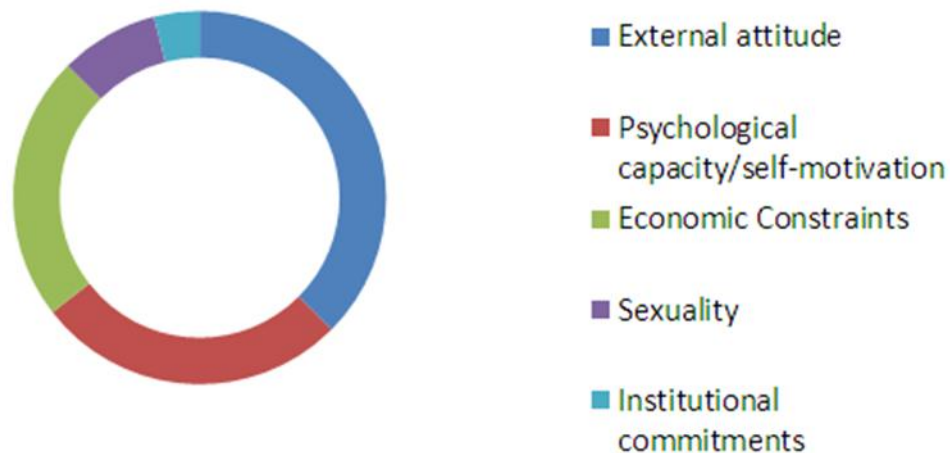
Source: Own survey, 2019

In fact, what reduces as the education ladder goes up was not only the participation figure but also the rate at which the participation increases from academic year to another. This has directly to do with academic performances of female students throughout the education ladder, which of course remains lower.

4.5. Factors Affecting Academic Performances of Female Students in the School

According to the information gathered through both the questionnaire and the focus group discussion, the major responsible factors that were found out to hinder the academic performances of female students were; external attitudes toward female education, internal capacity (self-motivation), and economic constraints. In fact, other factors such as sexuality, biological factors and institutional commitments were also identified as factors negatively affected the academic performances of female students. Yet, the first three were identified to take the lion's share of the impact in this study.

Figure 4.5: The Level of Impact of Identified Factors Depending on their Rankings



Source: Own Survey, 2019

As in the chart above, the level of influence of those factors on academic performances do vary. The level of impact was found out to be dominated by external factors followed by psychological capacity and economic factors. Yet, there was also inter-dependability among factors as explained in the sections below.

4.5.1. The Impact of Economic Factors on Academic Performance

As previously presented under the demographic information section of this chapter, the majority of the respondents belonged to families whose average income puts them under poverty line.

Considering the figures the way they are, it seems that the students' economic status is above poverty line. However, we should consider the fact that the figure is meant for a household level whereas the international poverty line measurement considers individuals. Thus, the figures reported are actually meant to be distributed for the family members. This in turn indicates that the income per family member is much lower given that the students are impliedly come from larger family sizes. We can further draw a conclusion that the share of the individual income of each individual female student is 1/6th of the average family income reported in the demographic information section just by considering the fertility rate index. Therefore, the economic status of a minimum of 93.5% (excluding those who answered above 8,110 ETB+) of the female students in Dolo Secondary School remain under the 'poor' and 'poorest of the poor' category.

The responses given regarding evaluations of their level of satisfaction with their family's earnings seem to be important in understanding the impact of economic factors in their overall academic performance and aspiration. The responses showed that 78.7 % of the respondents valued their satisfaction negatively in the questionnaire session.

Table 4. 2: Evaluation of the Satisfaction with Economic Background

Level of economic Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Highly satisfied	1	0.5%
Satisfied enough	42	20.8%
Dissatisfied	96	47.5%
Very dissatisfied	63	31.2%

Source: Own Survey, 2019

Similarly, it was found out in the focus group discussion that the majority of the students confirmed that they often find it difficult even to fulfill basic hygienic materials including the need particularly to the female students' sanitary towel which in turn affected their attendance according to the panelists that took part in the discussion session.

Similarly, the fact that the greater portion of those female students do spend an average of 3-4 hours a day playing their part(direct and indirect)in generating income shows us the impact of their economic status on their academic performance. Addressing the questions of whether

they were directly involved in money generating activities with the family, more than 72% reported that they do not directly get involved in money generating activities. Instead they indicated that they spend no less than four hours a day assisting their parents and other family members who are in charge of directly generating money for the family. No respondent reported that she has no responsibility in money generating at all.

Like that of expectations to directly and indirectly play their part in the income generating process, there can also be an association with and responsible for the expectations of parents about their daughters' education. As mentioned under the 'external attitudes' section of this chapter, 34% said they are encouraged to quit schooling and assist the family while the rest 14% said their parents encourage them to finish their education and start the available job once they complete grade ten. In this case, the possibility for the expectation to be associated with lower economic statuses of parents remains high.

4.5.2. The Impact of External Attitudes toward Female Education

The expectations of the parents and decision makers within the family toward the education of their daughters according to the responses given in the questionnaire forms were found out to be discouraging. 47% of the respondents reported that their parents wanted them to get married whereas 34% said they are encouraged to quit schooling and assist the family while the rest 14% said their parents encourage them to finish their education and start the available job once they complete grade ten. Among the total number of students who filled the questionnaire forms, only 5% of them reported that they were encouraged by their parents to focus on further education and become professional women in the future.

The discouraging attitude was also found out to be not only with their parents but also with their teachers too though relatively better with the teachers. The respondents claimed that the expectations of some teachers are influenced by the expectations of the environment.

The impact of the attitude of the community on the academic performance of female students can in no way be overlooked as the impact is immense. Apart from the negative impacts it results in directly, it does also affect their academic performance by influencing the attitudes of teachers. The worst is that it finally challenges the personal capacities of the subjects to confront it and influences their attitude toward themselves.

4.5.3. Level of Sexuality and its Influence on the Performances of Female Students

The information gathered through both the interview and questionnaire revealed that sexuality remains a problem in the learning process of female students in Dolo secondary school. 61% of the respondents reported that they do experience sexuality even though their evaluations of its level of seriousness and influence on their academic performances varied. Regarding its level of seriousness, a conclusion was drawn that the sexuality type most of the female students experienced was the 'silent' one. The majorities reported that they had not experienced direct and serious harassments. It is safe to conclude the external attitude toward female influenced the approach of the male community in their surrounding including their teachers in fact. Though we don't overlook its influence at all, the share of this particular factor in determining the academic performances of female students in the selected school was found out to be relatively lower.

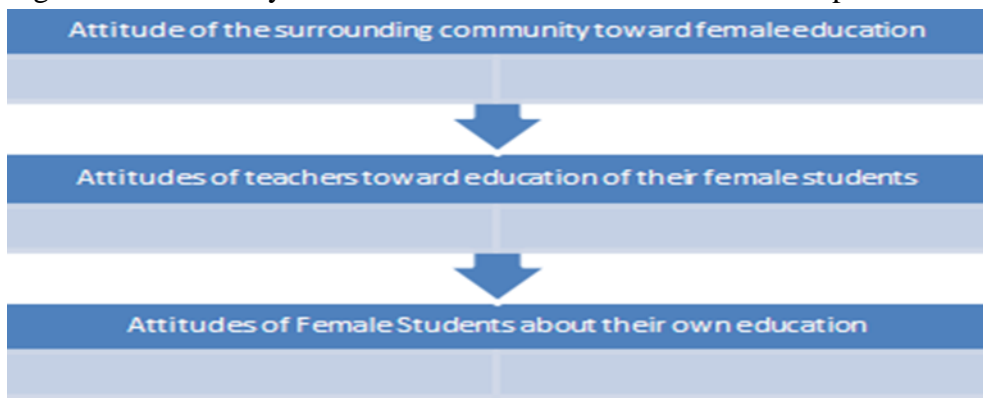
4.5.4. The Impact of Psychological Factor/ Internal Capacity/Self-Motivation/ on the Academic Performances of the Students

As discussed under the review literature part of this study, this particular factor has directly to do with the psychological make ups and perceptions of the female students themselves toward their potential and their education. Their personal strength to handle external/ environmental/ negative influences in a way that confronts the negative impacts in their academic perception and even to turn it to an opportunity whenever there is a way it can serve so.

The information gathered indicated that the self-thought of those female students are usually victims of the thoughts of their surrounding as mention in the previous sub-sections of this chapter. Particularly in the focus group discussion session, this study figured out that female students tended to prefer to cope up with the expectations of their surrounding instead of fighting against the expectations in their moves.

In addition, this study has also found out in the focus group discussion part that the attitudes of their surroundings have influenced their own attitude toward their own education. The following chart shows how the external attitudes influence their own attitude too.

Figure 4.6: Hierarchy of the influence of attitudes from external parties to the self



Source: Own Survey, 2019

4.5.5. The Impact of Institutional Commitments on Academic Performance

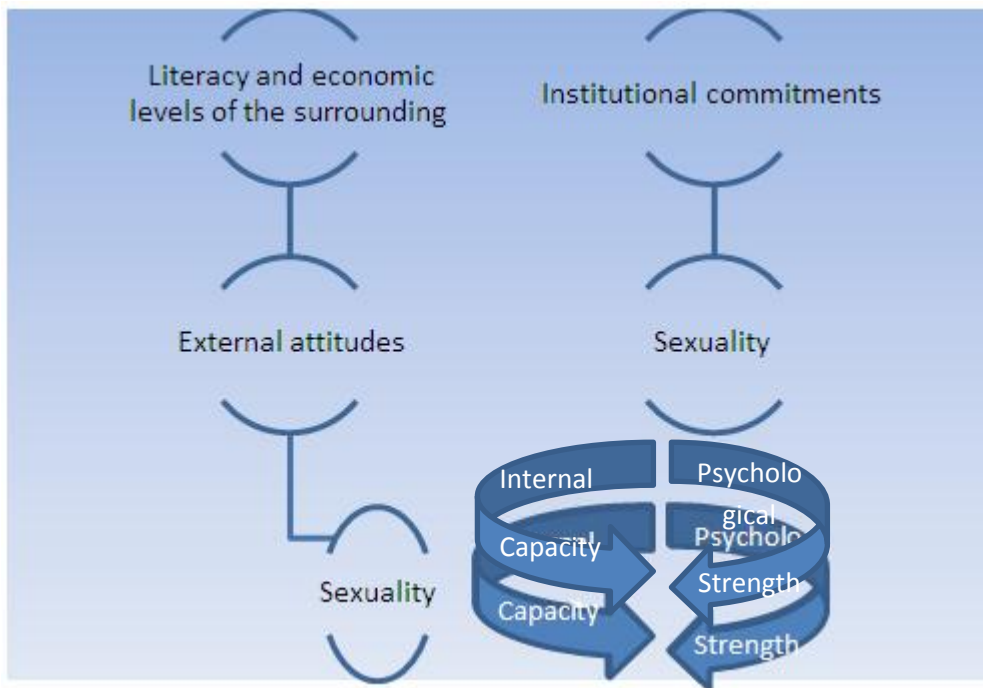
According to the information gathered regarding the commitment of the school in terms of creating a better learning environment for female students and increase their performance, the commitment was found out to be lower when compared to the expectations set by MoE. For instance, it was found out that school had no tutorial packages to support female students. Similarly, it was found out that codes of conduct that underline the seriousness of sexual harassment for instance were not promoted well within the school community. Lower institutional commitment to improve refreshment areas and equipment for female students within the school compound was also identified.

Yet, the information gathered revealed that the impact of this particular factor in affecting the academic performances of those students still remained relatively lower. Addressing of the question about their list of top three responsible factors together with rankings, only 3.4% of the total of 202 respondents made this particular factor among the three dominant factors they think responsible for lower academic performances of female students in the first cycle of secondary education in the school. And none of them among the 3.4% respondents ranked this factor 1st, which shows a relatively lower level of influence when compared to the others.

By and large, three factors were identified to be dominant responsible factors affecting academic performances of female students in the selected school. Attitudes of the surrounding community (parents, teachers, and other stakeholders), internal capacity/self-motivation/ and economic constraints were the dominant factors identified in this study.

In fact, a given factor is not separated from another factor as identified from the information gathered through the focus group discussion. The flowing chart shows how a factor influences the existence of the other.

Figure 4. 7: Relationship among the Factors



Source: Own Survey, 2019

As attempted to picture the inter-dependability of the variables considered to influence academic performances of students, the two independent variables (literacy and economic levels of the surrounding on the one hand and institutional commitments on the other side) highly influence the vulnerable variable (internal capacity). Practically in this study in fact the impact of the institutional commitment was not that determinant unlike the way it appears in the above theoretical chart. On the other hand the first independent variable (the literacy and economic background) appeared to highly determine the internal capacity whereas the two together took the lion's share to determine academic performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Conclusions

This chapter is all about summarizing the study process, the major findings of the research as well as conclusions based on the findings. In addition, recommendations thought to be way outs from the existing challenges are made in this chapter.

So as to address the objective stated, this study was conducted on Dolo Senior Secondary School of Somalia Regional State. The researcher targeted 205 female students among the total population of 410 female students enrolled at the school in the 2019/20 academic year and 202 of them responded. Simple random sampling method based on Probability Proportionate to Size was employed to reach the targets. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistical techniques along with figures and charts and whereas qualitative data was analyzed using content and thematic analysis.

The study has found out that gender disparity has remained high in Dolo Secondary School. The share of female students remained lower when compared to their male counterparts in all the three stages examined in this study (second cycle of primary education, first cycle of secondary education, and second cycle of secondary education). In addition, the share of female students witnessed a reduction as the education ladder increases whereas the rate of increase from one academic year to the other remains relatively lower when compared to the increase in total number of students enrolled. In the 2019/20 academic year for instance, the share of female students enrolled in the first cycle of secondary school and second cycle of secondary school was reported to be 28.5% and 24.3% respectively. Similarly, the competitiveness of those female students in academic scores remained lower when compared to their male counterparts.

Among the potential factors affecting academic performances of female students, three major factors were identified to dominantly affect academic performances of grades 9 &10 female students at Dolo Secondary School; external attitudes, self-motivation and economic factors.

Apart from that, the negative attitudes of parents and the surrounding community towards female education have highly influenced the attitudes of teachers and the female students themselves. As a result, their perceptions about their own capacities to be competitive in their academic performances and attend further education to become professional women in the future were indicated to be a bit lower.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the major findings, this study recommends that the school administration together with relevant authorities should arrange a continued awareness creation package towards confronting the attitudes of parents toward education of their daughters. Similarly, teachers should handle the influence of the community in their attitude toward the education of their female students. Finally, female students themselves should work aggressively on managing the external attitudes and try their best to exploit the best of their potentials towards their academic life.

In terms of addressing economic factors on the other hand, the role of the female students may remain low given their capacity. Hence, the school administration together with the support of local and international concerned bodies should work on ways of offering some of the accommodations like equipment including hygienic materials for students so as to at least minimize the level of influence the particular factor affects the academic performances of female students.

On the other hand female students should work on improving their perceptions and expectations from their academic life beyond the factors that distort their attitudes.

Generally speaking, the school administration together with other concerned authorities in the region like the education bureau of the regional state should work harder towards addressing the major factors that affect the academic performances of female students. Though institutional commitment was not reported as a major factor by the respondents, this researcher believes that it has a relatively greater potential to address many of the factors and in fact it is responsible. Hence, it should play a vital role in changing the attitude of the community through consecutive awareness creations. It should play a role in sharpening the attitudes of teachers through codes of conducts among other ways. It should also play an

active role in helping the students to hold constructive perceptions about their potentials and fates through trainings and through creating opportunities for those female students to get inspired by successful role models in any possible means.

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Appendix I

Questionnaire Form

Dear Respondent,

Filling this questionnaire form takes a maximum of 20 minutes and its sole purpose is to examine factors that influence the academic performance of female students in your school. Hence, your due attention and honest answers will mean a lot in the success of this study. I would also like to assure you that the information you provide will remain confidential for third parties. Also, please be informed that you do not need to write your names or addresses.

Part I: Demographic information

1. Please put an [X] in the most appropriate box.

Age:

- a) <14 []
- b) 14-16 []
- c) 16-18 []
- d) 18+ []

2. Literacy level of parents/ decision makers within your family

- a) Not educated at all []
- b) Attended basic primary schooling []
- c) Attended secondary education []
- d) Attended tertiary education and beyond []

3. Average monthly income of your parents

- a. <486 []
- b. 500- 1,012 ETB []
- c. 2,400 ETB- 4,50 ETB []
- d. 5,000 ETB- 8,100 ETB []
- e. 8,100 ETB +

Part II: Main information

1. Your recent grading in your classroom:

- a) Top 3
- b) Top 10
- c) 11th -20th
- d) -----
- e) The last ten

2. How many female teachers do you have?

.....

3. Do you experience some absenteeism in your class?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

4. IF Yes, how? Please mention

.....

5. What do you think are the main reasons that are associated with the Poor performance of girls in schools?

- a. Early Pregnancy []
- b. household responsibilities []
- c. Male child preference at the expense of girls []
- d. Sexual harassment and abuse []
- e. Lack of role models and mentors []
- g. Lack of sanitary towel []
- h. Lack of proper lighting and poor environment for learning at home []
- i. Early marriages []
- j. external attitudes towards education of females []
- k. House hold tasks or domestic activities assigned to girls []

6. How often do you experience sexual harassment within the school?
- a. Usually []
 - b. Often []
 - c. Sometimes []
 - d. rarely []
 - e. never []
7. How do evaluate the level of seriousness of those harassments you experienced the harassments?
- a. very serious (one like physical harassment) []
 - b. inappropriate words []
 - c. less harmful yet harassing words and approaches []
8. How do you evaluate the attitudes of your teachers toward female education?
- a) Highly encouraging []
 - b) Encouraging enough []
 - c) Not bad []
 - d) Discouraging []
 - e) Highly discouraging []
9. What are the expectations of your parents as a female student?
- a) They expect me to attend higher education and become a professional woman in the future []
 - b) They want me to start an available job after completion of grade 10 []
 - c) They want me to get married []
 - d) They want me to quit school and assist the works of the family []
 - e) Other please mention []
10. How do you evaluate your satisfaction of your economic status? []
- a) Highly satisfied []
 - b) Satisfied enough []
 - c) Not bad []
 - d) Dissatisfied []
 - e) Highly dissatisfied []

11. Which factor do you think have larger impacts on your academic performances? Please indicate by ranking the choices in front of them.

- a) Sexuality []
- b) Biological factors such as experiencing periods []
- c) Economic constraints []
- d) External attitudes toward female education []
- e) Self-motivation/ psychological capacity []
- f) Institutional commitments []
- g) Other/s. please mention

12. How often do you spend assisting family activities daily?

- a) Not at all []
- b) Less than an hour []
- c) An average of 1-2 hours a day []
- d) An average of 2-3 hours a day []
- e) An average of 3-4 hours a day []
- f) An average of 4-5 hours a day []
- g) More than five hours a day []

13. Information you want to provide regarding factors that affect academic performances of female students in secondary school []

.....

..... Thank you for your time!

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Appendix II

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Excluding the details and follow-up questions, the following were the main questions the researcher wanted those female students who took part in the focus group discussion:

1. How do you evaluate your academic performance?
2. What factors do affect your performance?
3. Please mention details of the socio-economic challenges that you do face frequently and affected your academic performance? Please include those factors that are solely attributed to women only?
4. What is your expectation from your education?

Annex III

Observation Guide Questions of the Study

1. What could be the socio-economic backgrounds of sampled students and what kind of impact could it have on their reactions and academic performances?
2. What factors do really affect the performances of female students?
3. How inviting the school compound and community were for female students in particular?
4. How do high school female students do perceive themselves and their potential?