

Causes & Effects of Absentees of Girl Students In Government Primary Schools of Rajasthan

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Abstract:

The major objectives of the present research study were to analyse the factors affecting the educational development of the girl students and the magnitude of absentees of girls at primary level in the Government school of Rajasthan. India. An attempt was made to address the phenomenon of absenteeism in Government schools in the present context. This research was based on both primary and secondary data. The Structured Questionnaire 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:

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

Education is one of the basic activities of people in all-human societies. The continued existence of society depends upon the transmission of culture to the young. It is essential that every new generation must be given training in the way of the group so that the same tradition may continue. Every society has its own ways and means of fulfilling this need. Education is one of the ways of fulfilling this need. Thus, education is fundamental to the success of any modern society and it plays an important role in the economic development of a Country or State.

During the last seven decades since independence, much is being done to emancipate women. Education of girls is one of the basic features of the plan. Many schools and colleges are founded for girls. Even co-education has received considerable support from the public, and although orthodox parents still view the system of co-education with suspicion, a large number of families send their daughters to co-educational institutions. Female education is, indeed, receiving a great impetus and the advance made by our country in this direction during the last decade.

Rajasthan has been allocating a substantially higher amount to education sector than the other BIMARU states. Efforts are being made to universalize elementary education in Rajasthan through community-ownership. Programmes like *Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan* are attempting to provide an opportunity for improving

human capabilities to all children, through provision of community owned quality education in a mission mode. The State Government is endeavoring to achieve the objective of total literacy through various programmes/schemes such as *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, *District Primary Education Programme*, and *Programme Continuing Literacy*. School children are being benefited with mid-day meals in the state. *Apki Beti Scheme* has been introduced for the girl child belonging to BPL families and whose one or both parents have died. A scholarship is made available under the scheme.

It is clearly evident from researches that students' absenteeism affects the learning of the students and performance of the exams. Parents of the students give importance to the different factors while selecting schools for their children i.e. students effort, cleanliness and orderliness of schools and perception of teacher absence. The studies showed that large no of absences of students effect the student achievement negatively. India is a developing country and it ranks at 113th position among 120 countries of the world and literacy rate is only 57%4. Low literacy is due to many reasons in which poverty, lack of awareness, gender discrimination and government's mismanagement play fundamental role. Different issues regarding schools also a cause of girl absentees e.g. drop out of student, school's infrastructure, strict attitude of students and student's absenteeism especially in rural areas. Rural areas of Kota district are backward as literacy rate is

very low and girl students remain absent from schools frequently.

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.

Thus, girls' participation in elementary education is considered a first step towards achieving equality. Many scholars have argued that education is generally beneficial for all and that there is a positive correlation between education and socio-economic status.

A further important family-based issue in girls' education is the number of members in a household and the birth order of a girl. These significantly influence her chance of being enrolled and remaining in school. It is stated "from birth, a child's position within society is governed by specific rules and patterns of behaviours and by reciprocal duties, obligations and responsibilities". Gender inequality in education in these societies is a manifestation of the "generalized and systematic discrimination against women and girls". The belief and feeling that "girls belong to their husband's family" has serious implications for the decisions of families regarding their daughters' schooling. Parents tend to invest in the education of their sons since they remain in the natal family and not in that of girls as they will join another family on marriage.

As parents have to pay more dowries for more educated grooms, they prefer to keep their girls out of school from early on. The practice of dowry acts against girls' education. Girls are married off at an early age for both cultural and economic reasons. There is a strong belief that girls should not be kept unmarried after they attain puberty. This is due to parents' concern for the sexual safety of girls. Some researcher found that this factor holds true in India. The findings related

to early marriage as a reason for school leaving by girls has resonances in the Indian scenario.

A number of studies have highlighted that here are two key factors related to the school as a material and socio-cultural entity that affect girls' education. These are mostly related to school supply and quality i.e. the availability of schools, resources, teachers, structures and facilities that influence girls' enrolment and persistence in schools. Historically the distance of the school from girls' habitation was identified as one significant factor affecting their access to education. *Karlekar* found that of the 36 percent of girls in her sample who never attended school, many cited "the absence of a neighbourhood school as the major reason". Even the availability of a school in close proximity to girls' homes did not always ensure the enrolment and retention of girls. The study, conducted in a southern state of India, found that even though there was a school within a radius of one kilometer of the habitation, girls' dropout rate was still recorded at 50 percent. These findings reveal the fact that the mere presence of a school does not ensure girls' participation and indicate the importance of the safe school environment, effective teachers, dynamic classrooms and a gender sensitive atmosphere to ensure girls' participation.

The state's efforts from the perspective of policy formulation to ensure "free and compulsory education" for all children of 6 to 14 years have been reviewed by researcher who conclude that the state has to revisit its policies and "economic equations of efficiency" and "look more critically at quality and equality of education". Although public schooling opened up participatory spaces for the masses, it reproduced social and gender inequality. Maps gender disadvantage in Indian education from girls' and women perspective by providing a historical record, from the independence of India in 1947 to 2021, of the evolving policy and programme scenario in the field of education. The strong political will and leadership is important to bring about change. Much literature focuses on the subordinate status of girls and women in the family and in society and the powerful role of family and kinship in influencing girls' life options. *Stromquist's* statement holds true in the Indian context and suggests that girls' access to education depends on a number of issues, some of which relate directly to the availability of facilities whereas others depend on wider socio-cultural issues. The goals of education often come into conflict with views about femininity and feminine roles that prevail in a given developing society such as India.

III

The Structured Questionnaire were constructed for collecting data. This research was based on both primary and secondary data. In primary data Using closed ended Questionnaire methods. Questionnaire consists of multiple-choice questions,

which are easy to understand. Structured Questionnaire 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.

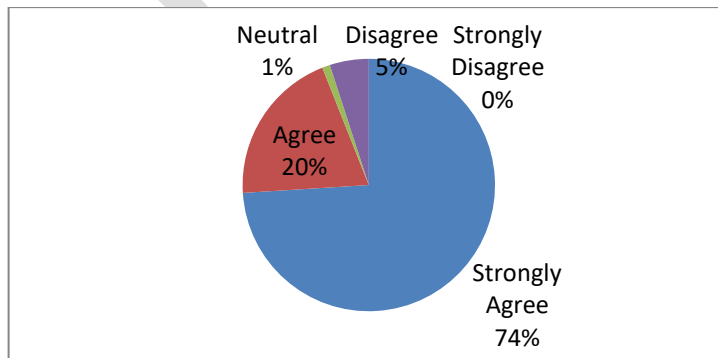
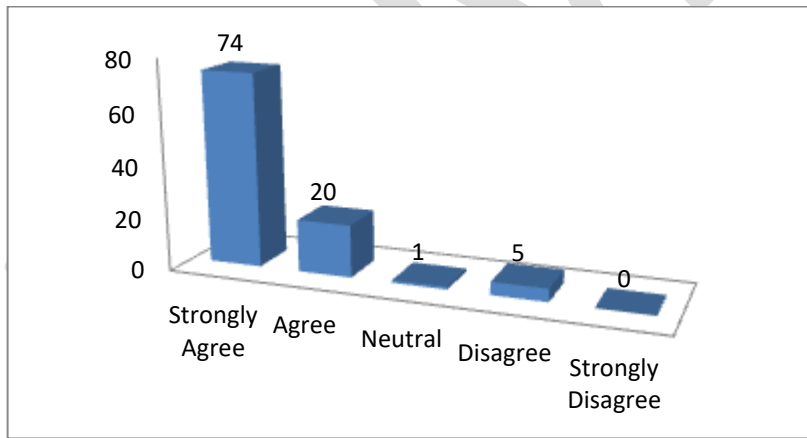
IV

Data analysis based on questioner are as following: -

1. Poor family and parents want their child to work for family

Table No. 1

Response	Number of Responses	No. of Responses (%)
Strongly Agree	148	74
Agree	40	20
Neutral	2	1
Disagree	10	5
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total Responses	200	100

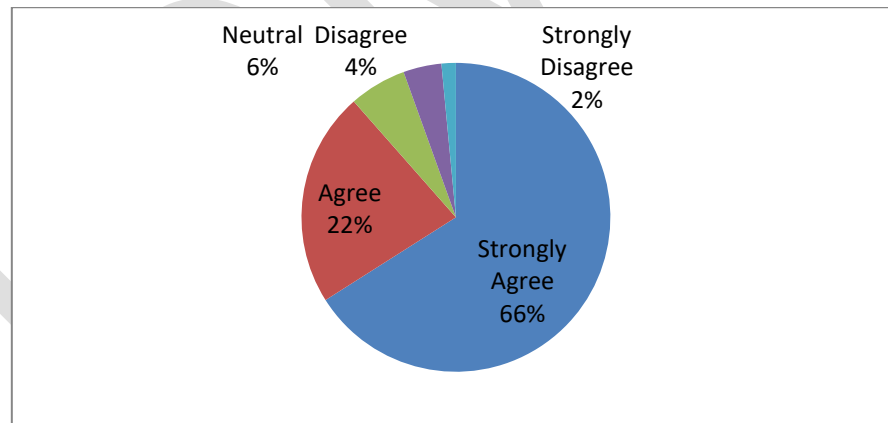
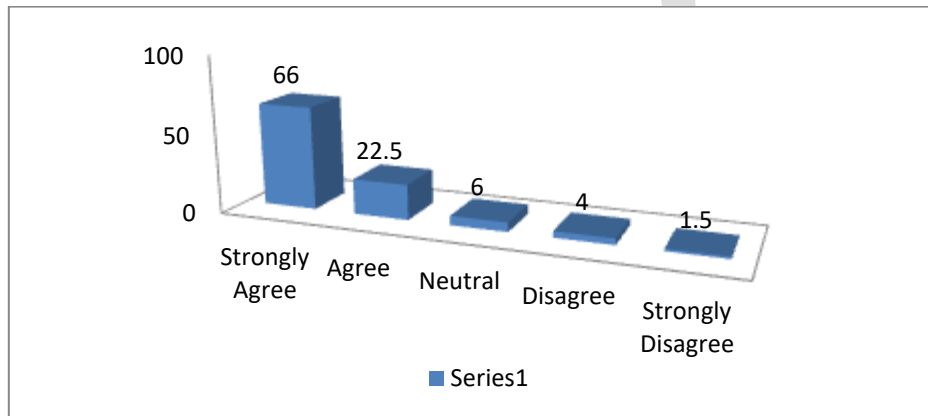


Interpretation: 74% respondents are strongly agreed on the above-mentioned reason that parents want their child to work for the family rather going for learning. 20% agree to it. Only 1-2% disagrees.

2. Illiteracy among parents

Table No. 2

Response	Number of Responses	Responses (%)
Strongly Agree	132	66
Agree	45	22.5
Neutral	12	6
Disagree	8	4
Strongly Disagree	3	1.5
Total Responses	200	100



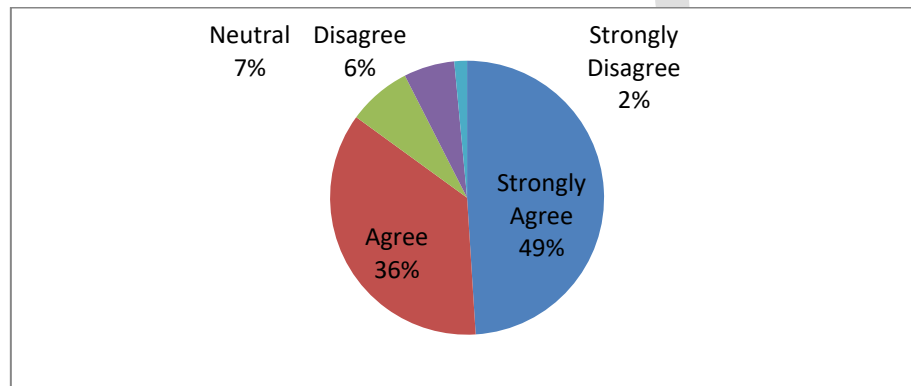
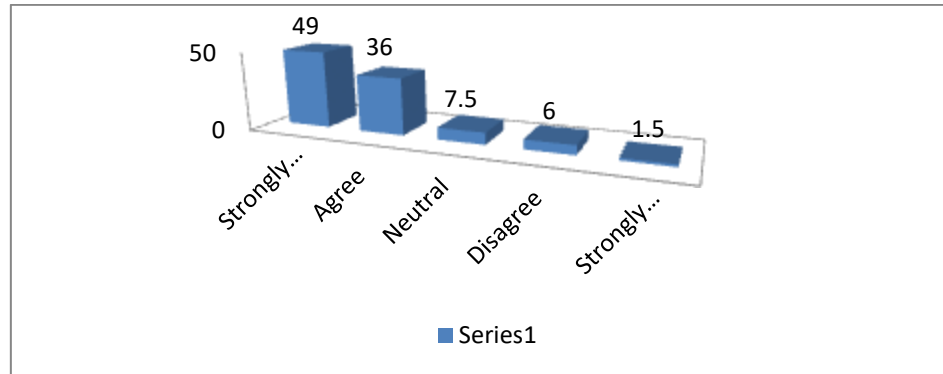
Interpretation: 66% strongly agreed and 22.5% agreed, this shows that illiteracy is also one of the factors of dropping out of the girls student

1. Conservative and Orthodox family

Table No. 3

Response	Number of Responses	Responses (%)
Strongly Agree	98	49
Agree	72	36
Neutral	15	7.5
Disagree	12	6
Strongly Disagree	3	1.5

Total Responses	200	100
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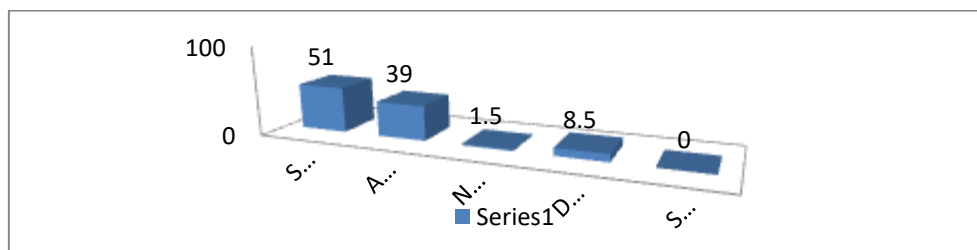


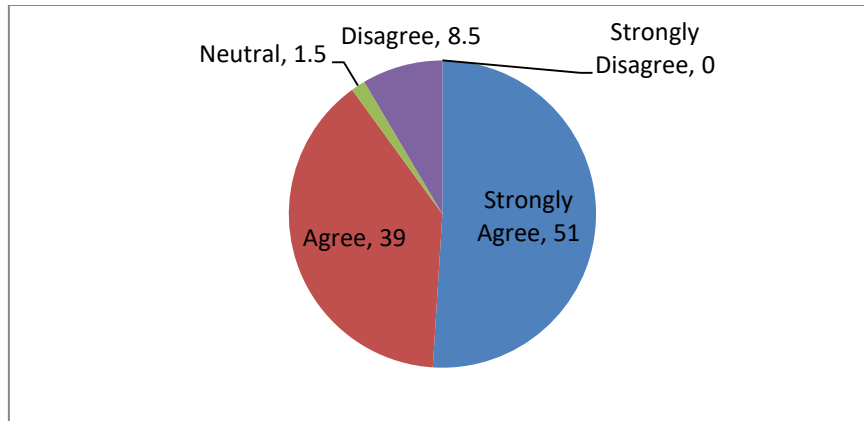
Interpretation: Out of the total respondents 49% strongly agreed, 36% agreed, 7.5% are neutral, 6% disagreed and 1.5% strongly disagreed, thus the conservatism in the family is also prominent factor acting as an enemy to girls education.

2. Social pressure for marriages and not sending the young girls outside home

Table No. 4

Response	Number of Responses	Responses (%)
Strongly Agree	102	51
Agree	78	39
Neutral	3	1.5
Disagree	17	8.5
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total Responses	200	100



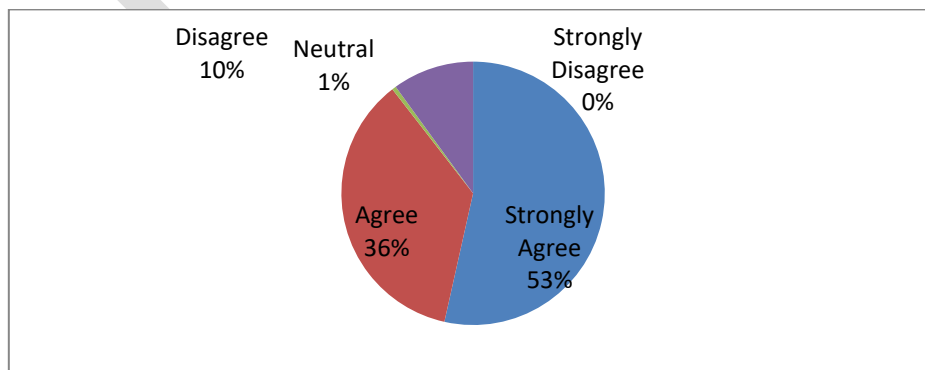
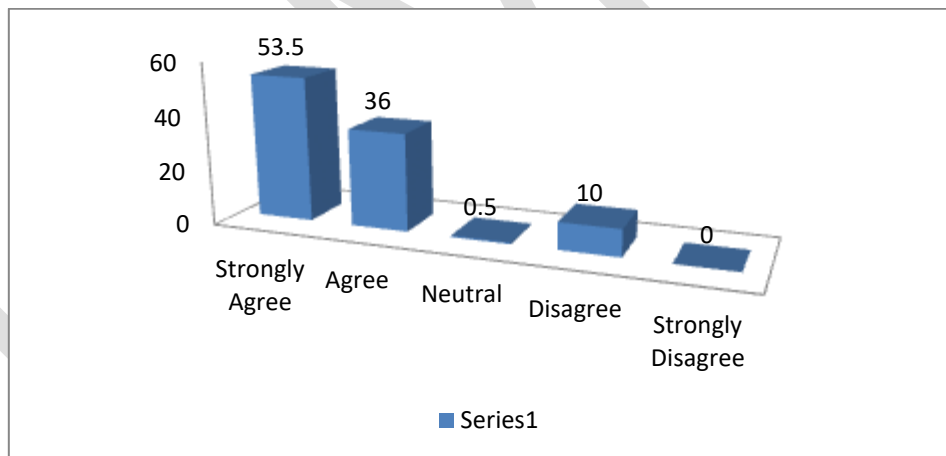


Interpretation: 51% strongly agreed, 39% agreed, 1.5% neutral and 8.5% disagreed. The figures show that social pressure is quite high on the family for not sending the girls ward for education.

3. Insecure School Environment

Table No. 5

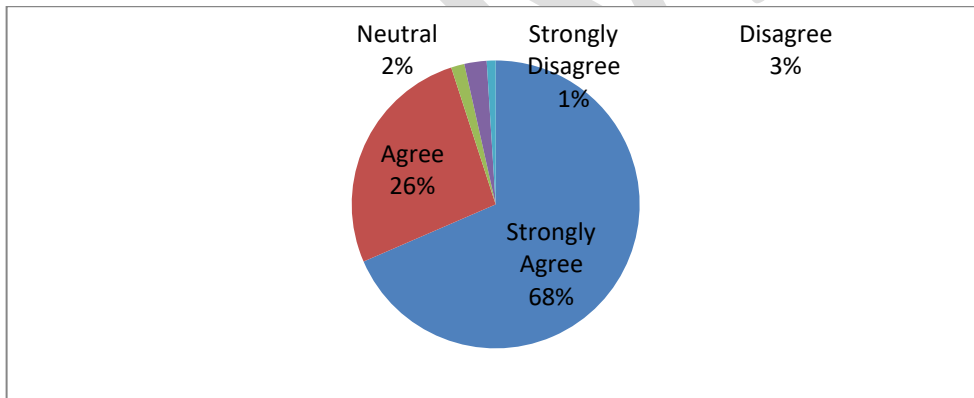
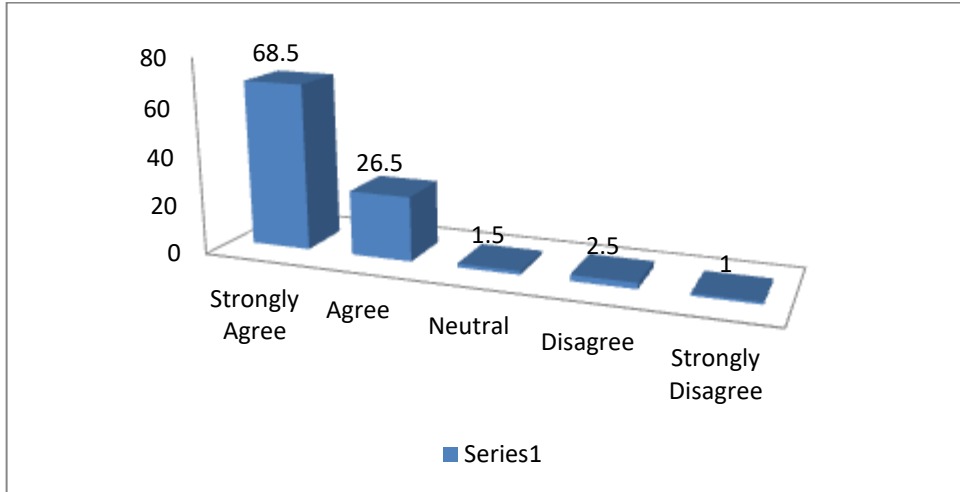
Response	Number of Responses	Responses (%)
Strongly Agree	107	53.5
Agree	72	36
Neutral	1	0.5
Disagree	20	10
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total Responses	200	100



Interpretation: 53.5% strongly agreed, 36% agreed, 1/2% neutral and 10% disagreed. This shows that school environment is not secure.

4. Commuting Problem (Table No. 6)

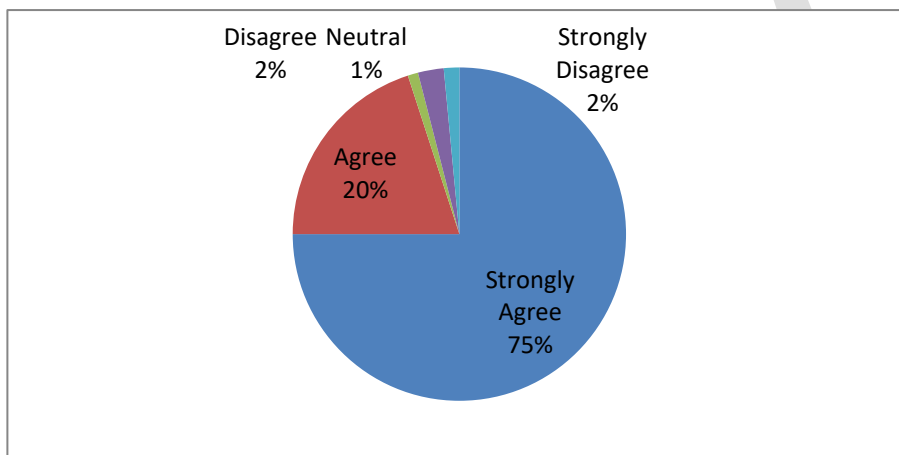
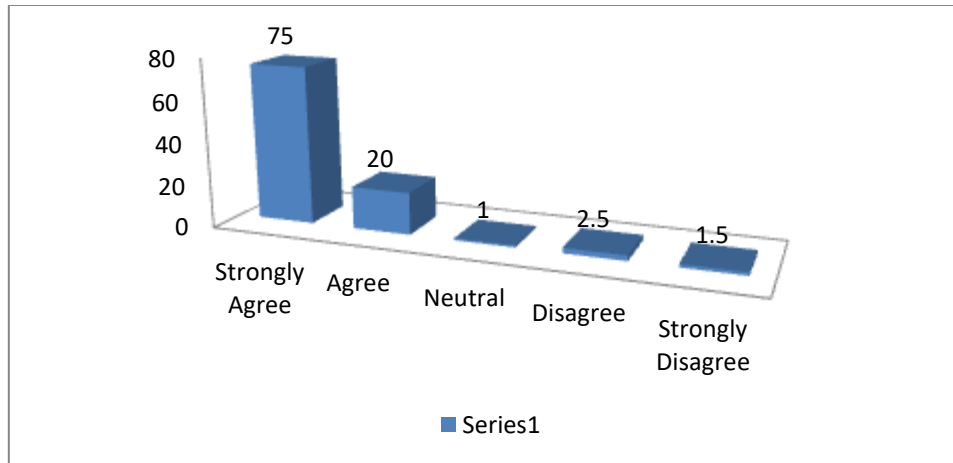
Response	Number of Responses	Responses (%)
Strongly Agree	137	68.5
Agree	53	26.5
Neutral	3	1.5
Disagree	5	2.5
Strongly Disagree	2	1
Total Responses	200	100



Interpretation: The above figure shows that the schools are quite far to go for getting education. In Rajasthan government has opened many schools in rural sector but as there is no transport facility available to reach the schools is a major reason of girls' dropout.

7. Lack of Interest of Students (Table No. 7)

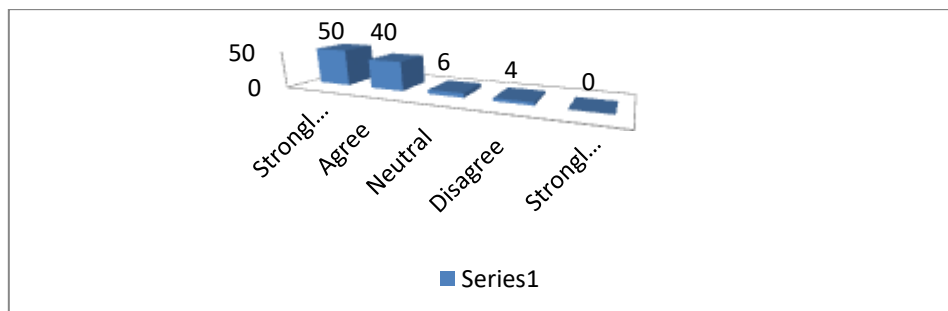
Response	Number of Responses	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	150	75
Agree	40	20
Neutral	2	1
Disagree	5	2.5
Strongly Disagree	3	1.5
Total Responses	200	100

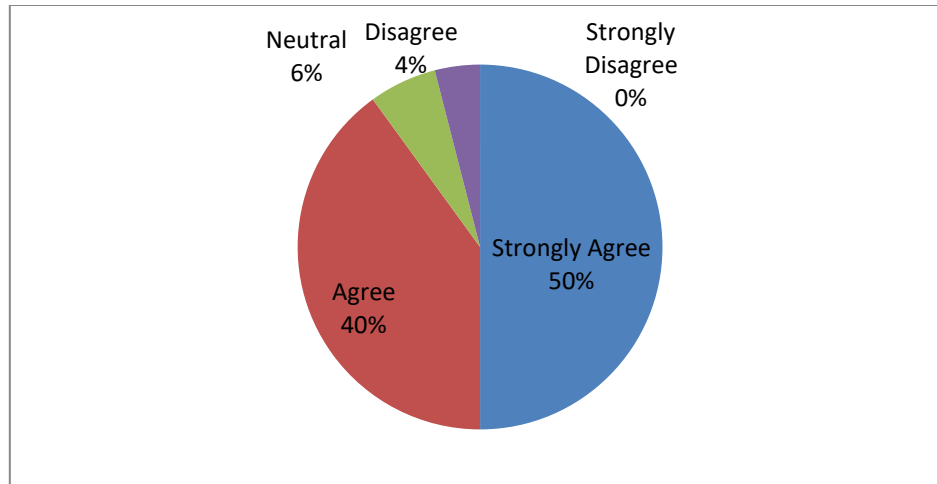


Interpretation: 75% strongly agreed, 20% agreed, 1% neutral, 2.5% disagreed and 1.5% strongly disagreed. This shows that lack of interest among students towards learning is there.

8. Grasping Problems (Table No. 8)

Response	Number of Responses	No. of Responses
Strongly Agree	100	50
Agree	80	40
Neutral	12	6
Disagree	8	4
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total Responses	200	100

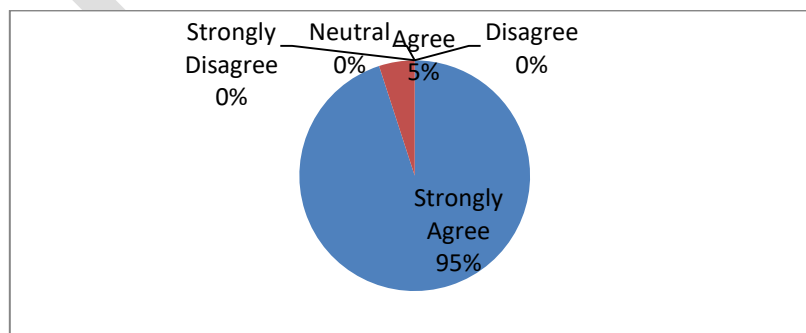
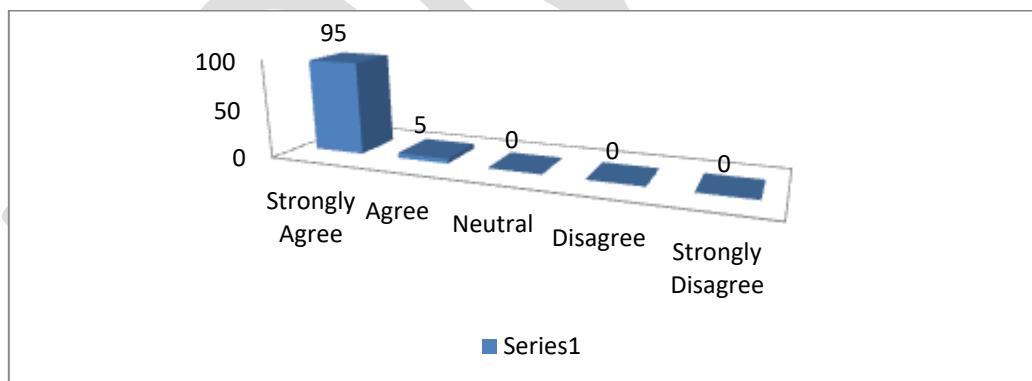




Interpretation: 50% strongly agreed, 40% agreed, 6% neutral and 4% strongly disagreed. Difference between the delivery rate and grasping rate also is a crucial factor which is affecting the girls going to school.

9. Introwardness and Fear among students (Table No. 9)

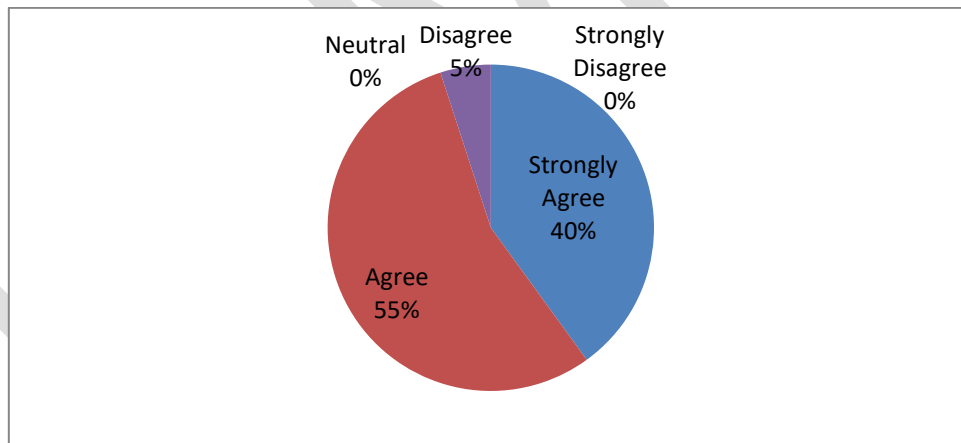
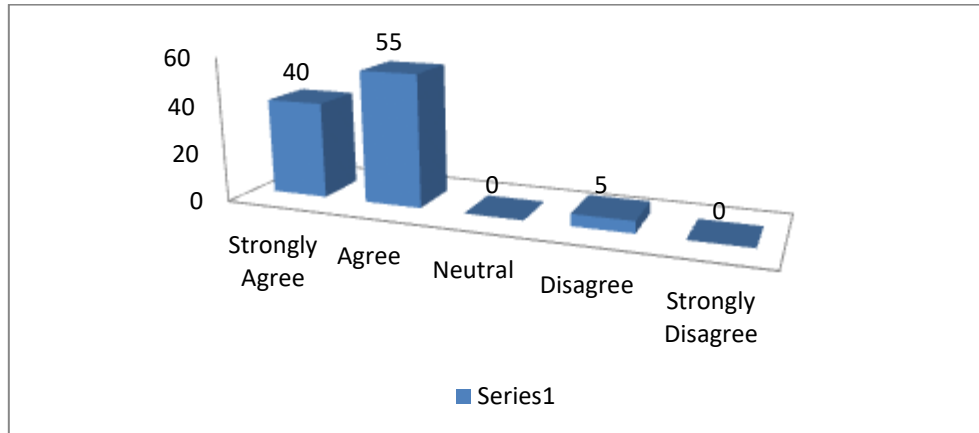
Response	Number of Responses	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	190	95
Agree	10	5
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total Responses	200	100



Interpretation: 95% strongly agreed and 5% agreed. This shows that students are not confident enough to cop up in the classes.

10. Lack of counseling and guidance. (Table No. 10)

Response	Number of Responses	Response (%)
Strongly Agree	80	40
Agree	110	55
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	10	5
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total Responses	200	100



Interpretation: 40% strongly agreed 55% agreed and 5% disagreed. These figures show that short of counselling and lack of guidance is also affecting girls and their parents' interest in education.

V

In Rajasthan after making various efforts of the government it has been found that girls drop out is still a concern. Economic and social structure of rural India is different from the urban areas. Constant efforts of various agencies failing in making families understand that how education is important for their girl child. Village people still believe that girls' first responsibility is looking after their home rather getting education or working. Farmers are more focused on

farming then their child education they want their child to help them in their work in place of taking education in schools. Rajasthan Government is sincerely working in reducing the girl child education and providing them financial support to the families to encourage girls' education. Rajasthan Government and NGO programs have significantly achieved their objectives in reducing the girls drop out from the primary school. But still, it is matter of a concern as the problem is persisting in the society.

A steady rise in the literacy rate but persistent gender gap is there. Girls drop is more than the Boys drop out. As per the information collected shows that the multiple reasons are there which are hampering the girls' education and increasing the girls drop-out in the schools. There are many reasons for it in Rajasthan State such as Child not interested in studies, Parents not interested in studies, financial constraints, Unable to cope, to work for wage/salary, Participation in other economic activities, attend to domestic duties, Facility for study doesn't exist in the nearby town. Early marriage and pregnancy are widespread and common in many parts of our country. It prohibits the girls from attending school or returning to school after the birth of their child, so provision may be made (laws and policies) for establishment of school/alternative centers for such group of children to bring them back to school. It can develop self-esteem and psychological comfort in them to continue in their studies. Statistics revealed that majority of children who are not registered at birth are girls. Parents find it difficult to admit their child without birth certificate. This is another case for not being able to enroll girl child in school. Though reasons are many relating to girls' drop out in rural areas but major concern relating to it are:

- unfavourable attitude of parents (i.e. parents are not interested to send their grown-up girls to schools),
- Involvement of girl children in domestic activities (i.e. they need to look after their siblings at early stage and work to supplement their family members at later stage of life) and
- Poverty of parents. Owing to the above reasons, parents develop negative attitude towards education of their girl children.
- Gender discrimination
- Early marriage and pregnancy
- Violence against girls in schools
- Funding
- Child-domestic labour
- Lack of government schools
- Lack of encouragement

There is a significant decline in girls drop out but still a big concern for the nation. Everyone has a principal right that is Right to education. Now government is providing free education and other facilities to all the children of our nation, especially poor children and those residing in rural areas. After the empirical study researcher suggests the follows

suggestions to improvise the overall situation and eliminate the girl drop out from the schools:

- ❖ For enhancing accessibility to the school, the content of education must be relevant and suited to community needs.
- ❖ Dialogue with the users of educational services is indispensable to the adoption of changes to local realities.
- ❖ conduct awareness-raising campaigns designed to mobilize communities including community leaders, religious organizations, parents and other family members, especially male family members, with regard to the rights of the child, giving special emphasis to the girl child and monitor changes in attitudes;
- ❖ conduct awareness-raising campaigns and gender training targeted at law enforcement and justice system officials with regard to the rights of children, giving special attention to the girl child;
- ❖ eliminate traditional and customary practices which constitute son-preference through awareness raising campaigns and gender training;
- ❖ recognize and promote the contribution of girls and boys to development;
- ❖ Decision-makers should be aware of the importance of parents' opinion and what they expect from school for their children.
- ❖ Health services like regular health checks, for distribution of medicines, counseling, referral services should be provided.
- ❖ Incentives are provided to encourage women and teachers with good qualifications and experience and train them to work in schools in rural areas. This will reduce migration to urban schools.
- ❖ Proper financial aid and basic things should be made available to the poor families of the rural India.
- ❖ Every financial aid and non-financial support should be withdrawn immediately of the persons who are stopping their child to go to school.
- ❖ More frequent activities such as Seminars, Workshops and Camps to make people aware about the importance of education and how much government is facilitating the things in providing education to children as well as the adult ones.
- ❖ Special workshops to be conducted by the government in order to provide the elders persons not only word knowledge but also educate them about the technology.

- ❖ RKCIT and Computer training should be organized or sponsored by the government and the government should ensure that beneficiaries are really getting benefitted by that.
- ❖ Awareness Generation Short-term orientation programme for the mothers should also be organized during the local holidays and festival periods in the school campus.
- ❖ promote non-discriminatory treatment of girls and boys in the family and in this regard, adopt measures to ensure equal

access by girls and boys to food, education and health.

Thus, in view of the above, it can be concluded that education of girls leads to improved self-esteem and therefore, give them more opportunities by which they feel more confident and educate themselves.

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