

## **Post-Primary Girls Education in the Newly Merged Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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### **Abstract**

Around the world, an estimated 129 million girls are out of school, including 32 million of primary school age, and 97 million of secondary school age. These statistics show that post-primary girls' education is one of the serious concerns for national and international organizations in the context of developing countries, including Pakistan. The ratio of girls' post-primary education in rural Pakistan, including the newly merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), is very dismaying. Girls' participation in education beyond primary level in the newly merged districts of KP, including district Bajaur, is even starker. The aim of this study, thus, is to explore guardians' decision about girls' education beyond primary level in district Bajaur. We have attempted to explore the prevailing beliefs and practices about girls' education and unpack factors affecting girls' post-primary education. The data for the study come from in-depth qualitative interviews with eighteen (18) male guardians/respondents. We employed purposive sampling technique in the selection of respondents. The collected data were processed and analyzed in line with thematic analysis technique. The analyses are informed by "Equality of Opportunity in Education" and "Equity of Opportunity in Education" discourses in sociology of education. The study's findings reveal that the people of district Bajaur support girls' education beyond primary level provided that they are provided education in conformity with the cultural norms. They (respondents) also stressed for the availability of high schools and colleges in the vicinity with transportation facility. The study findings suggest that *Purdah* (veil) enables girls to equip themselves with education.

**Keywords:** Equality of education, equity of education, post-primary education, *Purdah*, thematic analysis

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## Introduction

Goal four (4) of the Sustainable Development Goals stresses all nations and communities to ensure inclusive and quality education for all. Despite all international and national efforts, gender inequality in education has remained an issue across the developing countries, including Pakistan. Pakistan, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2019), ranks second in the world with the highest number of out of school children. An estimated 22.8 million children between the age of five and 16 years are out of school in Pakistan (Ullah, 2020). Five million children are out of school at primary level, and 60% of them are girls. However, out of school children are rapidly increasing after primary level. About 17.7 million children in the age group of 10-16 years are out of school, and 51% of them are girls (UNICEF, 2019; Ullah, 2020; Cyan et al., 2017). The Pakistan Bureau of Statistic Labor Force Survey, 2017-18 illustrated that the total education ratio of Pakistan is 62.3%, 72.5% are males and 51.8% are females (Pakistan Economic Survey 2018-2019). In addition to this, the total ratio of education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) is 55.3% (73.3% are males & 38.5% are females) (Pakistan Economic Survey, 2018-2019). The enrollment of students in KP (excluding the newly merged districts) at primary school level is 70% and 30% are enrolled at middle and secondary schools levels (Annual Statistical Report, 2019). The status is not encouraging when it comes to the newly merged districts of KP.

According to the Annual Statistical Report (2019), the overall literacy ratio at primary level in the newly merged districts (NMDs) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 57%. Males' literacy rate is claimed to be 73% whereas the literacy rate among females is 40%. Similarly, the total Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at the secondary level is 16%, including 25% boys and 6% girls. These statistics show a very dismaying picture of female education in the newly merged districts, including district Bajaur. The status of girls' education in Bajaur gives a very grim picture. At the primary school level, the total net enrolment ratio is 58%. The net enrollment ratio for girls and boys is 32% and 83% respectively. It is important to mention here that girls' enrolment ratio, beyond primary school level, decreases. The enrollment ratio at secondary level is 18% including 5% girls and 37% boys (Annual Statistical Report, 2019). This low literacy of girls in general and girls' education beyond primary level in particular is due to the deeply embedded gender discrimination in culture (Parvez et al., 2017; Purewal & Hashmi, 2015; Onoyase, 2018) and the gendered education facilities and resources in district Bajaur. There are 653 schools (423 for boys & 230 for girls) in the district. There is no higher secondary school for girls in the whole district for the population of 536,520 females (Annual Statistical Report, 2019; Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017). In fact, lack of educational facilities creates an obstacle in the way of girls' education (Naveed, 2018; Ullah et al., 2021). These statistics show that the girls' education beyond primary level is a key public issue

and needs to be examined with a deeper insider perspective. We also believe that the issue has not received due academic attention in the socio-economic context of the newly merged districts of KP. This paper, thus, aims to explore the prevailing belief of guardians about girls' education beyond primary level. We also intend to unpack the factors that affect girls' education beyond primary level in the particular context of district Bajaur, erstwhile Federally Administrated Tribal Area (FATA), which is not documented in the previous literature.

### **Review of the Literature**

Gender inequality in education is a persistent problem across developing and under developing countries. Global statistics show that girls are not enjoying equal opportunities (Psaki et al., 2018). According to the UNICEF (2020), 132 million girls are out of school across the world. 34.2 millions of them are out of school at primary level, 30 million girls from middle school, and 67.4 million are out of high and higher secondary school. Girls are the two-third illiterate population of the world (World Population Review, 2020). In developing countries, the highest numbers of out of school children (of all age groups) are living in the Sub-Sahara Africa. In Sub Sahara Africa, girls of all age groups were more deprived of education than their boys' counterparts (Randall et al., 2020). A large portion of the poorest countries is still illiterate (Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2016). 3.7 million children in Afghanistan are out of school and just 54% of them complete primary education. In Pakistan, 51% girls below 16 years of age are out of school (UNICEF, 2019; Ullah, 2020; Mughal et al., 2019). Out of school ratio for girls is greater than boys (Yakubova, 2020). This vivid and wide gap exists despite the fact that these countries have accepted education as a fundamental right of all children. But girls have been discriminated against in education (Verma, 2006). Low ratio of post-primary girls' education is one of key challenges faced by all developing and underdeveloped countries. At the secondary school level, the enrollment ratio of girls is less than boys (Herz et al., 2006). Girls lack access to secondary education opportunities in many part of the world (Sharma et al., 2020; Psaki et al., 2018). A large number of illiterate adults are living in South Asia, Sub-Sahara Africa, and West Asia. About one-third of the world's illiterate adults are females (World Population Review, 2020; Zua, 2021). In majority of the developing countries, females have been deprived of their equal access to education which has adversely affected their due role and contribution in the socio-economic development of their societies (Gouleta, 2015; John, 2017).

Despite the fact that 66 out of 177 countries have gender inequality in access to primary schooling, some progress has been seen in gender parity at the primary level. Since 2000, gender parity at primary and secondary school level is celebrated as the greatest achievements in some part of the developing countries. From 2000 to 2015, the

number of countries that achieved gender parity both in primary and secondary level has increased from 36 to 62 (Evans et al., 2020; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015). One of the key reasons for slow progress is culture stereotypes. In parts of the world, including many parts of the rural Pakistan, culture stereotypes prevent girls from full participation in education (Bernhoft, 2020). In Pakistan, especially in the rural areas females do not have equal access to education (Zeshan, 2018). Studies have identified gaps between boys' and girls' school attendance in Pakistan. Boys' school attendance rate is 20% higher than girls. Based on regular attendance of enrolled students, boys' attendance are 50% compared to 41% of girls (Cyan et al., 2017).

The low ratio of girls' education is due to various factors. The unfavorable attitudes of parents and community are among the major barriers toward girls' education (Purewal & Hashmi, 2015; Onoyase, 2018). Most parents think of spending on boys' education an investment and that on girls' as wastage of resources. They did not consider girls' as breadwinner for their families (Purewal & Hashmi, 2015; Ullah, 2013; Ullah & Ali, 2018). Investment in girls' education is considered little or no chances of return (Herz et al., 2006). In the rural areas of Asia, parental decision regarding their children's education is not only based on what will be better for their children but are also based on what will be the best for their families' future income (Mahmud & Amin, 2006). A great majority of parents in rural areas discriminate against their daughters when it comes to education (Chingtham & Guite, 2017). Moreover, gendered socio-cultural practices contribute to the low ratio of girls' education. Socio-cultural norms and values limit girls' access to education (Gauthier, 2018). Male members are unwilling to send their girls to school due to family honor (Yakubova, 2020). Strict implementation of *Purdah* restricts girls' from getting education (Awan & Malik, 2020; Mustafa et al., 2016). Furthermore, lack of educational facilities is an obstacle in the way of girls' education (Naveed, 2018; Ullah et al., 2021). In many countries, including Pakistan, girls have limited access to secondary schools due to non-availability of secondary school in the nearby vicinity and lack of transportation to attend a distant school (Naveed, 2018; Jamal, 2016; (Buzdar et al., 2011). Lack of quality female teachers and absenteeism is also a serious issue in girls' education which discourages them to continue their education (Sarker et al., 2019; Yassin, 2020; Naveed, 2018). Education for All (EFA) reported that in some African and Asia countries education is only available for boy students (John, 2017). Besides this, among the poor household, the cost of children education was considered a burden on family (Chingtham & Guite, 2017; Connelly & Zheng, 2003). Many people, due to lack of economic resources, do not educate their daughters (Yadav & Yadav, 2016). The case of newly merged districts is not different. Lack of high and secondary schools, transportation, economic resources and fear of losing family honour discourage girls'

education beyond primary level in district Bajaur (see Naveed, 2018; Jamal, 2016). This cursory overview of the published scholarship in gender and education stresses us to examine the status of girls' post-primary education in the newly merged districts. The study is informed by "equality of opportunity in education" and "equity of opportunity in education" discourses.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is informed by five decades long worldwide feminists' intellectual, social and political struggle for social equality and justice in education (see Ullah, 2013). In gathering together leading discourses and theoretical debate in feminists' educational agendas on social justice and greater social equality in education, we have attempted to inform our study and analysis with the discourses of "Equality of Opportunity in Education" and "Equity of Opportunities in Education". These popular discourses have enabled us to make critical analysis of the contemporary thinking, belief and practices about girls' education beyond the primary level in the specific context of district Bajaur, KP.

Equality of opportunities means equalizing existing school resources and educational benefits, rather than giving favour only to girls/women or boys/ men education. Having observed and experienced vivid inequalities and discrimination in education, feminists, in the 1970s, argued that equality of opportunity in education is essential as all students (boys/girls) need the same opportunity and access to education (Weiner, 1986; Wrigley, 1995). Feminists argue that gender inequality in education is directly related to the subordination of girls/women by boys/men in society (Weiner, 1986; Ullah, 2013). Without equal education, especially equal education opportunities, equal subject choices, experiences, or qualifications, girls/women as social groups have over the years been subordinated and subjected to inferior status in society (Weiner, 1986; Dalal, 2015). Drawing on the equality of opportunity in education, we have tried to know our respondents' (guardians') aspiration and the available opportunities for girls' education in district Bajaur. In district Bajaur, girls do not have equal access to education. There is lack of equal educational opportunity for girls. Most of the guardians are in favour of girls' post-primary education. Nevertheless, the lack of middle, high, and secondary schools and transport facility in the area discourage them to educate their girls.

It is, however, important to stress here that achieving greater social justice in education for girls in the social cultural environment of Bajaur will be a gigantic task in the near future. It was this understanding of "Equity in Education" that pushed us to engage the equity in education debate for the informed analysis of our data. "Equity of Opportunities in Education" means promoting fairness in education for all. And gender equity is the eradication of sex-role stereotyping and sex prejudice from the educational

process (Hilke & Gerhard, 1994). According to Andres, gender equity means the fair treatment of both boys' and girls' concerning their relevant needs. Gender equity refers to "freedom from favoritism based on gender" (Bitters & Foxwell, 1990). According to Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergency (INEE) gender equity focuses on those individuals who are in a disadvantaged position in education and other fields of life. It focuses to provide a fair share for those who have few shares on the basis of need. Equity leads to equality (INEE, 2010). Equity in education with reference to gender means promoting fairness in education and challenging the existing stereotypes and sexism that have historically limited girls' talents and access to education. Drawing on this, we have attempted to know whether girls in the newly merged districts, including Bajaur, have conducive, free and fair environment to pursue their education without fear of harassment, discrimination and threat of honour. We argued here that girls are not treated fairly in education field in Bajaur. People still have traditional mind set and negative attitude toward post-primary girls' education in most of the periphery area. Similarly, majority of girls' school are situated in distance from their vicinity, and unavailability of transport facility create barriers in access to girls' education. Thus, this is very early to talk about equality of opportunity in education. Rather the focus and policy should be on equity of opportunity in education.

### **Research Methodology**

The data for this small scale study come from one of the newly merged district-district Bajaur, KP. The total population of district Bajaur is 10, 93,684. Females are 49.056% and males are 50.943% (Pakistan Bureau of Statistic {PBS}, 2017). There are 653 schools (423 for boys & 230 for girls) in the District. At the primary school level, the total net enrolment ratio is 58%. The net enrollment ratio for girls and boys is 32% and 83% respectively. The enrollment ratio at the secondary level is 18% (5% girls & 37% boys) (Annual Statistical Report, 2018). These statistics reveal a vivid gap between boys and girls education. The aim of this study, thus, was to explore the prevailing beliefs and guardians' decisions regarding girls' education beyond primary level in the newly merged district's Bajaur of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Our key, objective as stated in the abstract, was to understand guardians' attitudes towards girls' education. We tried to know how girls' education is understood by guardians in the socio-cultural context of district Bajaur. How guardians think about girls' education beyond the primary level.

The data for the study come from in-depth qualitative interviews with male guardians (aged 18 and above). Interviewing male guardians was the only

choice as access to female guardians was not possible for male researchers in the social and cultural context of district Bajaur. Diversity in respondents was ensured. Our respondents consisted of farmers, laborers, teachers, doctors, and *Ulema* (religious scholar). The respondents included literate and illiterate guardians. It is pertinent to mention here that all the respondents that we included in the study had either daughters or sisters of school-going age or whose daughters or sisters attended or were attending primary schools. The respondents were selected with the help of purposive sampling technique. The sample size was fixed at 18 when we reached the point of saturation in our data. Data collection from respondents was carried out through interview guide. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions. The data was collected in face-to-face in-depth interviews with the respondents. Each interview took 15 to 30 minutes. The collected data were analyzed in lines with thematic analysis technique-following six steps. At the very outset, we transcribed the data. We read the transcription again and again to familiarize ourselves with data. We coded data. Similar codes were clubbed together for generating broader and specific themes. After a thorough review of the broader themes, we came up with specific themes. We titled each theme to know that what every theme is all about. Last but not the least we presented relevant responses under each theme and discussed these by comparing and contrasting with the findings of previous studies. Key findings are presented in the result and discussion section.

## **Result and Discussion**

Girls' access to education is one of the persistent issues in most of the underdeveloped and developing countries, including Pakistan. We, in this study, have attempted to discuss the prevailing belief about girls' education beyond primary level in the newly merged district Bajaur KP. The study findings suggest some major opportunities and impediments with reference to girls' post-primary education. Majority of the respondents (guardians) supported education for boys and girls beyond primary level. They were in favour of boys and girls higher education. Similarly, most of the respondents argued that *Purdah* enables girls to get education provided that girls observe it in line with the socio-cultural expectation of the area. Lack of educational institutions, transport facilities, and poverty were reported to be the key barriers in the way of girls' post-primary education in the area. Some of the key study findings are shared under the following main themes.

### **Guardians' opinion's about girls' education beyond primary level**

Parental support, particularly father support, is one of the key forces in the promotion of girls' education in a patriarchal society (Ullah & Ali, 2018). One of the main focuses of this study was to know guardians beliefs and attitudes about post-primary education of their girls. The study reveals that guardians were in favour of girls' education beyond primary level. A considerable number of respondents argued that girls' education is important for the betterment of society. One of the respondents said: "girls' education is mandatory for the uplift of society." Another respondent stated: "we are in favour of girls' education. We want our girls to become doctors and teachers. We wish them to serve the people of our area". In a nutshell, majority of our respondents showed positive attitudes towards girls' post-primary education. Their views can be summed up as:

Girls' education is indispensable for the development of society. Educating boys and girls is mandatory for a progressive and civilized society. We cannot compare a literate girl with an illiterate one as we cannot compare light with darkness. An educated girl can manage her responsibility better than an uneducated girl, especially after marriage (Extract from the interviews).

These responses suggest support for girls' post-primary education in the study locale. These findings are similar to what Raymond (2021) found in his study. Raymond argued that boys and girls should be provided equal education to contribute to their family in their respective capacities. It is important to stress here that equal access to education, particularly post-primary education, is inextricably linked to education facilities in the area as stressed by the respondents in this study and found by Ullah et al., (2021) in their study. The respondents stressed the availability of girls' high and higher secondary schools within an appropriate distance with proper transportation to ensure girls' education within the existing socio-cultural environment and culturally prescribed *pardah*.

### ***Purdah*, mobility and girls' education beyond primary level**

Girls' participation in education is also determined by female mobility norms in a community. It has been argued that girls' mobility, including attending school, is restricted by gendered norms (Ullah, 2013). The findings of this study contradict some of the earlier studies (i.e. Ambreen & Mohyuddin, 2014; Bangash et al., 2019; Ullah, 2017). Our study respondents argued that *Purdah* is not a barrier in the way of girls' education in district Bajaur. Many of the respondents asserted that they want to educate their girls provided that high and higher secondary schools are available in the adjacent vicinity so that our girls attend school in line with the culturally prescribed *Purdah*. One of the respondents stated: "we are in favour of girls' education beyond primary level. Nevertheless, they should be in *Purdah*". Another respondent said that "girls should be educated up to Master level but they must be in *Purdah* as per the Islamic instructions". One of the common responses from the data is summarized as:

We believe and support that girls should get education beyond primary level. They, however, should get it in *Purdah*. *Purdah* is mandatory for girls. If a girl goes to school without *Purdah* then people criticize her parents. When an adult girl moves out of her home without *Purdah*, she challenges principle of Islam as well as *Pashtun* culture (Extract from interviews).

A similar response came from another respondent who said:

When girls go to school in proper *Purdah* (wearing veil), people (parents) have no issue. Although, people are passing negative comments because no one in our society is without blame. Another respondent asserted that: "after primary school, there is no school in the vicinity of our area and people do not allow their girls to go to another village for education because they want to educate their girls according to their cultural norms". The above responses reveal that people are not against girls' education they want to educate their girls according to their normative structure of society. *Purdah* is not an obstacle in the way of girls' education. It is a gateway provided that education facilities are available for girls within their socio-cultural context. Similar findings were given by Sultana et al., (2009). They asserted that *Purdah* does not hinder females' access to education. Majority of the respondents stated that they could carry on education and job while observing *Purdah*. They like that their women wear *Purdah* due to various

reasons such as religion and culture norms. Similarly, Asadullah et al., (2012) found that women observe *Purdah* due to personal security, cultural and religious practice. Number of girls stated that we get education by observing *Purdah*. So, *Purdah* is not a major barrier to girls' education if girls are provided education facilities in their vicinity.

### **Guardians supported higher education both for boys and girls**

Majority of the respondents supported higher education both for boys and girls. They asserted that higher education is equally essential for boys and girls. Our respondents unanimously argued that those who can afford the expenses of education should provide higher education to their children. One of the respondents stated: "higher education is necessary for every person. Both boys and girls need to get higher education until they achieve their goal." Another respondent said that "both boys and girls must get sixteen years of education". One of the respondents attributed women issues with the lack of higher education by arguing that "girls' social problems have increased. The solution of girls' problems is in providing them higher educated". Another respondent argued: "both boys and girls are required to get at least fourteen years of education. Higher education enables people to understand their individual and collective responsibilities. Educated girls can economically contribute to their family". One of the respondents stated: "I want girls to become doctors and teachers as majority of the female teachers of our schools are not local. They come from the adjacent districts (i.e., *Swat, Malakand, Mardan, Charsada*". Similarly, another respondent argued: "girls who want to get job they need to get higher education". The above responses show that our respondents supported girls' higher education in Bajaur.

### **Lack of educational institutions and transport as barrier to girls' education**

Our respondents unanimously argued that the lack of schools beyond primary level in the adjacent areas and non-availability of transportation discourage them to send their young girls to school away from hometown. Majority of the respondents pointed out lack of middle and high schools in the area as discouraging factor for girls' education in Bajaur. Most of middle and high schools are situated in the settled areas which are not easily accessible to rural girls. Therefore, a large numbers of girls discontinue their education after primary schooling. One of the respondents asserted: "lack of educational institutions is a serious problem. School is situated in the settled areas, away from

my village which compelled many girls to quit their education after primary level”. Similar response came from another respondent who argued: “there is no middle, high school and college for girls in our [her referred to his locality] area”. Another respondent said: “my sister studied primary school and discontinued her education as there is no nearby middle or high school in our area”. These responses vividly show that the lack of middle and high schools is one of the main hurdles in the way of girls’ education beyond primary level. These responses affirm that young girls stop their education as soon as they complete their early (primary) education due to the unavailability of middle and high schools in their areas. These findings buttress the previous studies which revealed that rural girls quit their education due to lack of education institutions (see Naz *et al.*, 2020). One of the respondents asserted that “people don’t allow their girls to go to a distance school. People consider it an embarrassment and think that someone can tease or harass their daughters or sisters on the way to school”. These responses unpack the reluctance of the people in sending their girls to a distant school. They are afraid of their daughters/sisters harassment. Our findings are similarly to Bangash *et al.*, (2019) studies who found that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa girls have limited access to higher education due to family honour. Same opinions were expressed by another respondent. Who argued: “high school is at distant from us. Lack of transport facility makes it difficult for girls to get education beyond primary level. I am poor and can’t afford daughter transport expenses”. Another respondent stated: “one main reason is long distant of schools in our village. Schools are about 10 to 15 KM away. We have no special transport facilities for girls’ education”. These findings, when read in juxtaposition with Shahzad’s (2017) study, communicate a strong message that the lack of middle school and high school as well as transport facility are the key factors that prevent girls from education beyond primary level. The ultimate result of all these factors perpetuate gender inequality in education and the struggle of gender justice in education remains a distance dream.

### **Poverty as barrier to girls’ post-primary education**

In Pakistan, particularly in rural settings, preference for boys over girls is culturally embedded. Girls, from birth to death, experience many gendered disadvantages, including gender discrimination in education (Kaur & Kaur, 2020; Mehmood *et al.*, 2018; Purewal & Hashmi, 2015; John, 2017). Girls access to education become more challenging when they belong to family having low

socio-economic status. Girls' education in poor household is compromised (Mutuku, Njeru & Mburugu, 2020). Our respondents unanimously pointed poverty as a key barrier to girls' post-primary education in district Bajaur. They argued that majority of the people are poor and cannot afford their daughters or sisters education expenditures. Majority of the girls, when they complete their primary schooling, are forced by financial barrier to quit their education. One of the respondents stated: "poverty is the main reason for girls' drop out. I am poor and cannot afford the education expenditure. I cannot afford Rs.10 rupee to buy a copy and pen for my children". Similar response came from another respondent who argued: "poverty is a major issue. Most of the people are poor and cannot afford girls transport expenses to send their daughters to a distant school". Another respondent stated:

People in my village are poor and cannot not pay children transportation charges to send their daughters or sisters to a distant school. I am a labour. I earn Rs.300 per day. My sons were going to school and college. I paid them Rs.100 per day. I was unable to afford the expenses of sons' education. How can I think of daughters' education? Their education is unaffordable for laborers and poor people.

The above responses show that majority of people lack financial capacity to afford their daughters' education expenses. They expressed that they could hardly fulfill their basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter and are left with no resources to bear the expenses of their daughters' education. These responses communicate a strong gendered message that the poor people cannot afford children's education and if they try they can only educate their sons beyond primary level. Similar, children from low socio-economic background drop out from school due to financial reasons (John, 2017). Parents, due to lack of financial resources, consider children, especially girls' education a burden and liability. In a nut shell, poverty is one of the major obstacles in the way of girls' post-primary education in district Bajaur (also see Naveed, 2018).

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

Our study's respondents unanimously supported girls' post-primary education. They however, asserted that girls' post-primary education should be within the local culturally approved *Purdah* practices in the area. The study

revealed that it is not the people but the lack of middle, high and higher secondary schools, especially in the rural settings that prevent girls from post-primary education. Similarly, lack of school transport and poverty were reported to be the key barriers to girls' post-primary education. Promoting gender justice in education in Bajaur, girls need special attention and facilitation to continue schooling beyond primary level. There is an urgent need of establishing girls' middle and high schools at reasonable distance which enable rural girls to walk safely to schools. In case of distance schools, government and other organizations working for the promotion of girls' education should provide exclusive transport facility to girl students. Last but not the least; cash incentives/scholarship may be given to the poor families for encouraging them to send their daughters/sisters for education beyond primary level.

### **Recommendation**

In summary, following recommendations are made for the promotion of girls' post-primary education in the newly merged districts.

1. Mass media-radio, television, Facebook should be used to sensitize and engage parents/guardian and community to support and encourage girls' post-primary education in the area.
2. Provincial Government, in tandem with INGOs, NGOs and community, should ensure the availability of girls' high schools and girls' colleges within realm of community with transportation facility.

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