A Micro Analysis Of Demand- Side Determinants Of Girls Primary Schooling In Urbanised Areas Of Kokrajhar District In B.T.C.,Of Assam

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Introduction:

Girls' primary education has a pervasive and influential impact on economic development among various levels of education, In the developing world, today, data on the trends in the enrollment of girls at the primary level however shows that it was not commensurate with the growth of population in the relevant age-group (6-14years) despite the fact that universalisation of primary education has been the avowed objective of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).This needs an in depth understanding of the prevailing educational scenario, examining the ways in which community, economic status, parental attitudes and the cost of education affect the enrolment of girls of different groups.

Human capital theory argues that parents choose a level of education based on costs, wealth, opportunity costs, returns to education, and preferences (Becker, 1975, 1985). . To educate girls, the costs seem higher to parents and the benefits more distant and harder to capture. Looking at the combined costs of education, for the poorest families, direct, indirect and opportunity costs of primary education would be equal tone-third of their per capita expenditure and one and opportunity costs remain a significant obstacle to education for girl. Whether women can realize economic returns on their education is also subject to the structure of the job market. If formal employment opportunities are limited, whether by economic slowdowns or by discriminatory labor regulations and practices, it is impossible for them to gain

the full benefits of their education. This risks devaluing female education in the eyes of parents making decisions about their own children's education. But while girls can be more "expensive" to educate, small boosts in household income have more important implications for girls' enrollment than for that of boys. However, the relative importances of demand determinants vary by region and country, where each region has specific factors influencing girls' enrolment at schools. It is in this context that an attempt is made to study the demand determinants of girls' primary education in the urbanized areas of Kokrajhar district.

Study area:

The Kokrajhar district is less urbanized with only 13.38 sq km(2010 census) in areas having 4 urban towns, and economically backward with little or no industrialization. With poor work force participation, poverty is chronic in the district. Many questions that arise regarding girls primary education are motivated by the particular social and economic environment in the district. The literacy percentage of the Girls is much lower than boys in Kokrajhar district area, and rest of the Assam (rank 23).With female literacy rate being poor 59.54%, *(*2011-census) the participation of girls in school at primary level is 45.0 percent which is indicative of the lower social status of girls and women and the poor status of primary education[3] in the districts. Is the role of family background variables such as income and parental education or are household factors affecting the demand for female education Therefore, this paper examines the household characteristics that affect schooling decisions of girls of age group(6-14) in primary level in the urban areas of Kokrajhar district of Assam only.

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[3] primary education in India is divided into two part:-lower primary-class 1-v; upper primary-class vi-viii

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Review of related literature:

Lloyd et al (1998: 1-46) In Kenya found that girls are less likely to enroll than boys and found that demand determinants (parents' education) have a greater effect on educational attainment than supply factors (school quality). There is some empirical evidence that both girls and boys do receive more education as incomes increase (Chernichovsky, 1985). A family-economy approach to consumption argues that in some circumstances, wages from child labor are preferred over school attendance (Schultz, T.P., 1988). Opportunity costs of educating daughters include both foregone wages and contributions to domestic work and child care

(Appiah & McMahon, 2002 Das, P. (2007) says that the poor patriarchal framework excludes women from taking economic decisions at the family as well as the village level contributing to girls' low educational participation. Sathar and Lloyd (1994) finds that children with educated parents and higher household consumption level attend primary school, Kurosaki, Ito, Fuwa, *et al.* (2006) highlighted the impact of parent's illiteracy on their daughter's education in ensuring girls participation. . Women's wages are typically lower than men's due to time spent out of the labor market for pregnancy and child care, sex-segmented labor markets, and wage discrimination (Schultz, T.W., 1960; Becker, 1985). . Case studies in developing countries suggest that parents do forego investments in girls' education because they assume girls will fail academically, regardless of future labor market prospects (Rose &Tembon, 1999). Lewis and Lockheeds (2007) argue that factors such as gender, ethnicity, race and poverty contribute to girl's low educational participation and they term this –multiple exclusion. Chishti and Lodhi (1988) and Mishra, 2005 reveal that the decision to attend school depends on the gender of the potential

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student, household income, parents' education, and ethnic background. Mulugeta and Amanuel in Ethiopia (2000) shows that the educational level of especially the mother contributes towards enrolment of their children. The higher the educational level of parents, and mothers in specific, the more likely it is to have their children enrolled in school. Al-Samarrai and Peasgood (1998), studying the relationship between educational attainment and household characteristics, found a positive impact of a female headed household on educational achievement. The empirical research and literature in economics of education also demonstrated the importance of parents' education on educational attainment of the children.

Objectives of the study:

The objective of this paper is to establish the importance of demand-side factors that affect the decision of households for girls schooling of age between 6-14 years in urban areas of Kokrajhar district.Specifically, this paper attemptsto explain the relationship between demand factors and girls primary schooling.

Research Methodology And Data Base:

The present study is *mainly* based on the primary data. The primary data is collected by conducting a sample survey of urban households; assigned to the relevant school age girls of age 6-14 years. A well prepared, structured, questionnaire was designed and used for the collection of primary data. The sample size of the questionnaire is 75 households. For the secondary data source, the collection of information is based on the review of relevant literature, journals, research and survey conducted by various organizations, Public records and statistic, newspapers, magazines, websites and all such sources of acknowledged information was used for the study.

Conceptual framework of the study and Data Variables:

According to Becker's model, supply and demand factors influence investments of education. (Becker, 1975). Supply-side factors include the quality and quantity of school inputs available to girls through public and private markets. Demand-side influences relate to a family's willingness to pay and preferences including wealth, opportunity costs of schooling, parental preferences, and rates of return to educational investment.

The present study is based on only on household demand-side factors of girls' primary education. Dependent variable measure girls' primary education,. as female gross enrollment rates (GER) in primary school in 6-14years .In the household characteristics, an important variable of analysis is the income of the household, measured by two economic variables –per capita income and the GINI index of income distribution. Opportunity costs of girls' education come primarily from domestic labor, which varies with access to public goods that relieve the burden of housework. This effect is tested by measuring the percent of households with access to modern domestic technology (ADT) and child care.. Long-term rates of return is tested with female economic participation (FEP) restricted to economically active women ages 15-25, who are less likely to be married and are thus earn for parents as a return to childhood investments in education. Parental preferences are represented by head-households, measured as the percent of the female head to total head household (FHH).

Hypothesis:

The hypothesized model is that the demand for girls schooling enrolled at primary level is constrained by household socio- economic characteristics. The study will test the following hypothesis:

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1) The demand factors are significant determinants of school attendance for girls enrolled at primary level in the district;

2) These factors are not significant predictors of the participation of girls in the formal schooling system at primary level;

Descriptive Statistics and Empirical Results:

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics for each variable.

Table 1.Mean Values for Dependent and Independent Variables

Variable	Mean
Girls primary enrollment (GER)	51.9%
Female-headed household	46%
Per capita income	Rs. 1,445
GINI	44.0
Female economic participation (Age 15-25)	63.0%
Access to domestic technology	75.3%

Source: Primary data

In the variables included in the analysis, mean girls primary enrollment was 51.9 percent. The sample had a higher mean level of income inequality and a lower mean level of female economic participation rate. Access to domestic technology is averaged 75 percent in the sample study.

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Inter–correlations matrix is used to identify the critical demand determinants of girls enrolment at primary level as displayed in table 2.Pearson's formula for coefficient of correlation is used to analyze the coefficient of correlation (r) between two variables for the correlation matrix:

$$r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{\sum x^2 \, x \, \sum y^2}}$$

Where $x = X - \overline{X}$

$y = Y - \overline{Y}$

Table 2. Correlations matrix between girls (GER) and demand determinants of primary education

Variables	Girls (GER)	FHH	log(PCI)	Gini index	FEP	ADT
Girls (GER) +	1					
FHH	.65 *	1				
log (PCI)	.76*	.76*	1			
Gini index	-.12*	.12	.08	1		
FEP++	- .14	-.29*	.28*	- .29*	1	
ADT	.69*	.57*	.45*	- .08*	- .35 *	1

+ Girls gross enrollment rate in primary school

++percent of women age 15-25 who are employed or unemployed

 * Correlation is significant at 5 percent level or better (p<0.05), N-75

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The correlations show that girls' primary enrollment is positively related to per capita income, female headed household, and access to modern technology. However girl's economic participation rate is negatively correlated with female primary enrollment, female headed household and income inequality. However, there also exist strong correlations between some of the independent variables suggesting that these relationships are composite. Although a few factors are poorly inter- correlated, yet they influenced as a whole or are significantly inter correlated with other factors.

From the above analysis, it is inferred that households are disposed towards enrolment of their girls in primary school if they are richer, headed by a female head with a smaller family size and have more access to modern technology. Even if women's labor force participation is limited, the social benefits of girls' education justify significant public investment in girls' education. A finding is that the relationship between women's labor market participation and access to education is weak, female labor market participation does not significantly increase girls' school enrollment. Labor market opportunities as they are now may not influence the demand for girls' education if jobs for women do not offer rewards for primary education.

A 5% level of significance is taken to test the null hypothesis. The values of the variables are significant at 5% level. The null hypothesis as stated above is rejected. Hence, the demand variables are significant determinants of girls' primary education in the urbanized areas of Kokrajhar district of Assam.

Conclusion- Findings and Suggestions:

The present paper, has attempted to estimate the determinants of households demand affecting school -going girls. The findings are consistent with other studies done in very different parts of the world. The present study

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demonstrates that female headship, high income and access to domestic technology had a positive and significant influence on enrolment status of girls in the urban areas of Kokrajhar district. The results indicate that reduction of opportunity costs and increase in income and the long-term returns to girls' schooling can significantly increase girls' enrollment at primary level. The implication for policy- makers is that there will be increase in girls' schooling when attention is paid to the constraints of demand factors for primary education and broad efforts addressed the demand for girls' primary education. Expanding the scope of education policy to include demand factors can remove obstacles to schooling that are created by the realities of daily life for families in the urban areas of Kokrajhar district of Assam.

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