

## **Girl-child Education Outcomes: A Case Study from Ghana**

*Frank S. Arku*

*Emmanuel N. Angmor*

*Isaac K. Tetteh*

*Presbyterian University College*

*The importance of girl-child education is largely documented and initiatives to promote girl-child education are widespread. However, studies on service delivery methods, processes and the impacts are limited in the literature. This study assessed the Plan Ghana's girl-child educational project.*

*According to the findings, the project has helped to improve the girls' confidence level and performance in examination. They associated more with their colleagues from affluent homes, and the financial burdens on their parents were also lessened. However, more girls need to be supported and boys with the same socio-economic backgrounds of the girls also need to be assisted by such educational projects/programs.*

### **Introduction**

Although there has been extensive discrimination against girls, it was not until the 1990s that there was any determined effort to draw attention to the magnitude of the discrimination. Much of this new concern took place using the rubric 'the girl-child' which was extensively expressed in publications and podiums to support the cause of girls (Croll, 2006). It is against this background that the international community is making several attempts to promote girl-child education in developing countries; it was realized that there is a gender bias against girls at all levels of education as girls appear to have substantial educational difficulties (UNICEF, 2010). The reasons for the educational difficulties of girls are extensively documented (e.g., Warrington and Kiragu, 2012; Arowoshegbe and Enoma, 2011; Hunt, 2008; Araoye and

Sally, 2005). For example, Arowoshegbe and Enoma (2011) and Araoye and Sally (2005) observe that socio-cultural factors which are in favor of educating a boy-child can hinder girl-child education in Nigeria. Also, in some poor households, families are more likely to sponsor boys than girls (Subrahmanian, 2005). Thus, a girl respondent of Warrington's and Kiragu's (2012: 305) study among primary school girls in Kajiado District in Kenya said that "... if there was insufficient money for both her and her brother to attend school, her father would make her stay at home and would prioritize schooling for her brother".

Traditional gender roles and marriage expectations of females limit their access to education. De Silva-de-Alwis (2008:1) maintains that women's early marriage "... is one of the most pernicious manifestations of the unequal power relations between females and males" which negatively affect girl-child education in most developing countries. Warrington and Kiragu (2012) indicate that girls' enrolment in parts of Kenya was low because the girls have to spend enormous amount of time collecting clean water and firewood, and on top of that had to walk for about four hours each way to school. Other domestic work that girls in Africa engage in at the expense of their schooling includes taking care of younger siblings, washing clothes, and cooking (Kane, 2004). In addition, under-performance and girls being unable to complete school is partly caused by violence against girls by young and adult males against girls (Warrington and Kiragu 2012; Subrahmanian, 2007) and/or abuse by parents and teachers (Archambault, 2009).

The importance of girl-child education is largely documented (Michael, 2011; Oladeji, 2010; Roby *et al.*, 2009; Abu-Ghaida and Klasen, 2004; Liu, 2006; Slaughter-Defoe *et al.*, 2002). Michael (2011) for example, maintains that education is the most relevant human development indicator, and this is even more important to girls because it can reduce

poverty, lower birth and infant mortality rates and promote gender equality (Liu, 2006). Abu-Ghaida and Klasen (2004:2) also indicated that “Apart from its intrinsic values as a crucial development goal, education is also central to one’s ability to respond to the opportunities that development presents”. Thus, educating girls has the potential of reducing poverty among girls, hence promoting gender equality and empowering women (see also Arku and Arku, 2009). Oladeji (2010) also maintains that girl-child education can improve women’s negotiating positions and increase women’s sovereignty by giving them a stronger decision-making role within family, can also delays women’s age of marriage.

National governments and development agencies, local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals are assisting to promote girl-child education. At the international level, there are several agreements geared towards promoting girl-child education. They include the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2 and 3, which are to acquire universal primary education; and to promote gender equality and empower women, respectively (North 2010; Unterhalter and North 2011; Subrahmanian 2005). In Ghana, for example, before the implementation of MDGs, the Girls Education Unit was set up by the government to champion issues concerning the girl-child (MOE/GES, 2001).

Croll (2006) and Sutherland-Addy (2002) maintain that although promoting girl-child education has drawn the attention of many, few interventions have made any difference in the lives of girls. This has called for the need to assess more girl-child educational intervention packages to determine whether they are making positive impacts on girls.

The discussion has shown that although girl-child education has many advantages, many problems hinder girls from going to school. Initiatives to advance girl-child

education are available and NGOs have been involved significantly (Chapman and Mushlin, 2008). However, an understanding of service delivery methods, processes and impacts from the viewpoints of the beneficiaries is limited in the development literature. For example, what is the criterion that NGOs use to select the girl-child beneficiary? What strategies do the NGOs employ to empower the girls and to bridge gender disparity in education?

The objectives of this study therefore were:

- i. To identify the common criteria NGOs use to select the girl-child for their educational support projects
- ii. To identify the strategies NGOs adopt to empower the girl-child in their educational projects
- iii. To determine whether and how the strategies in (ii) above have achieved the desired objectives

### **Ghana and Girl-Child Education**

The girl-child educational system of Ghana was chosen for this study. Ghana introduced the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Educational (FCUBE) policy in 1995. The FCUBE strategy was to abolish some school fees in order to improve the demand for schooling. Additionally, the FCUBE sought to improve girls' school enrolment (MOE/GES, 2001). To better champion the cause of the girl-child, the Girls Education Unit was set up in 1997 and operates within the basic Education Division of the Ghana Education Service (GES).

### **Methodology**

#### Methodological lens

Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the researchers were able to determine and understand the

experiences of stakeholders as studies of exploratory nature that analyses real life experiences and their essence is the focus of phenomenology (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Thus, determining the criteria NGOs used to select the girl-child, and the strategies adopted by the NGOs, and whether the strategies have helped to achieve the desired objectives of the NGOs is exploratory.

Phenomenology as a strategy “is concerned about wholeness, with examining entities from many sides, angles, and perspectives until a unified vision of the essences of a phenomenon or experience is achieved” (Moustakas 1994: 58). Creswell (2007) highlights two approaches to phenomenology: (1) hermeneutic phenomenology of van Manen, and (2) Moustakas’ empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology. He goes on to compare the two approaches: van Manen’s (1984) phenomenology is not only a description, but it is also seen as an interpretive process in which the researcher makes an interpretation - the researcher ‘mediates’ between different meanings. Moustakas’ (1994) transcendental or psychological phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants (Creswell, 2007).

By wearing phenomenology methodological lens the investigators of this study abstained from making suppositions, but focused on a specific topic freshly and naively, constructed questions to guide the study, and derived findings that provided basis for further research. Furthermore, and pointed out by Moustakas (1994), the researchers followed a transcendental phenomenological approach by setting aside prejudgments regarding the phenomenon being investigated (known as Epoche process) in order to launch the study as far as possible free of preconceptions, beliefs, and knowledge of the phenomenon from prior experience and professional studies - to be

completely open, receptive, and naive in listening to and hearing research participants describing their experience of the phenomenon being investigated. Thus, combining van Manen's and Moustakas' standpoints of phenomenology, the researchers interpreted and described the experiences of the study participants.

#### The Study Method

The Presbyterian Junior High School at Mampong in the Akuapem North District of Ghana was selected for the study. An NGO in Ghana, Plan Ghana, was selected to represent NGO programming for girl-child educational projects. Even though the single-case study approach cannot be used for generalization, the aim was to explore the Plan Ghana initiatives with regard to their implications for educational practice. The school was selected because at the time of the research, it was the only school in the area where the project was implemented.

#### Plan Ghana

Plan is an International child-centered community development organization which has its headquarters in USA. The Ghana chapter, which has been operating since 1992, is referred to as Plan Ghana. Plan's areas of concentration are health, water and sanitation, protection, education, economic security, emergencies, child participation and sexual health including HIV. Plan is operational in fifty developing countries across Africa, Asia and Americas. Generally, there is global pressure to reduce poverty in developing countries, and providing the poor with easier access to education is one of the objectives (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008; Vavrus and Seghers, 2010).

The Transition and Persistence (TAP) Project is one of Plan's education initiatives in Ghana. Its aims among others are to increase school enrolment and completion rates

through various initiatives among selected Junior High Schools of Mampong; Presbyterian Junior High School is a beneficiary. The project, which is sponsored for three years in each school, aligns with the mission of girls' education unit under Ghana Education Service (GES). The project is funded by USAID.

The TAP project at Mampong Presbyterian Junior High School started in the 2010/11 academic year. The TAP project is designed to last for three years ending with the 2013/14 academic year.

Since the TAP project was implemented, a total of 21 girls (constituting three groups) were sponsored. Five completed Junior High School (JHS) and were in first year of Senior High School (SHS) at the time of this research. Six of the girls were in JHS 3 (the final grade of the JHS in Ghana), and the third group comprise of ten girls were in JSS 2 at the time of this research.

### **Data collection techniques and analysis**

Focus group discussions and face-to-face open-ended interview questions were used to collect data from all the 21 girls who were involved in the project. These methods allowed discussions on a range of issues and opinions on the subjects under studied. A total of three focus groups were conducted, with seven beneficiaries in each group. The girls were asked whether and/or how the project benefited them without the researchers suggesting the benefits to them to agree or disagree.

In order to triangulate information collected from the study participants (the beneficiaries) and also to gather new information, we obtained primary and secondary data from other stakeholders. This included interviews with teachers of the schools, and a focus group discussion with ten parents/guardians (i.e., five females and five males) to solicit their views on the impact of the project on the girls. The

Coordinator of Plan Ghana was also interviewed regarding how the beneficiaries were selected and the strategies adopted to achieve their objectives. Data on the students' examination results was collected from the Headteacher of the school. The researchers also used the case-control approach in which focus group discussions were used to gather information from eight boys and eight girls in the school who did not benefit from the project for their views on the project. Apart from being the mates of the beneficiaries, the eight girls had no characteristics with the beneficiaries based on the criteria Plan Ghana used in selecting the beneficiaries. This is because Plan Ghana selected all the girls that fit into their selection criteria for sponsorship. However, with the help of the teachers, boys with the same backgrounds, regarding the selection criteria, of the beneficiary-girls were selected for the study.

The focus group discussions and interviews were digitally audio recorded and transcribed within three days after gathering the information. It was recorded to ensure distraction-free conversation (Creswell, 2007; Van Manen, 1997).

With the exception of the teachers and Plan Ghana Coordinator who were interviewed in English, the focus group discussion and the interviews were conducted in *Twi* (a local language) so that the study participants could better understand issues and express themselves. Transcriptions of the digital audio recordings were performed in English.

The researchers translated the *Twi* into English and their translations were compared to ensure accurate translation of the responses. The respondents were asked whether and how the project benefited them; the guardians/parents were asked their views of the projects; the non-beneficiaries who were students were asked about their interests in the projects; and teachers were asked for their perceptions of the project.



#### Limitations of the study

The researchers limited the field visit to the few times that data was collected. It is possible that much of importance with the girls could have occurred throughout the school year which would have helped the researchers in the interpretation of the results. Also, an understanding of the dynamics of the families during the program year and systematic observation of each classroom and the teachers with emphasis on the behavior of sample girls would have helped in better interpretation of the findings but this was not done. However, the information gathered answered the research questions.

#### Findings

The findings are on the criteria used to select the beneficiaries, the strategies adopted by Plan Ghana to assist the beneficiaries both directly and indirectly, whether and how the strategies have benefited the girls, parents' views of the strategies in assisting the girls and non-beneficiaries perspectives of the project.

#### Criteria used by Plan Ghana to select the girl-child

Plan Ghana used various criteria to select beneficiaries. Participants reported that the primary criterion is that the girls had to have evidence of poverty and also be in regular attendance at school. Parents had no influence in selecting the participants as they were not consulted. Girls who met the following key descriptions were eligible for the TAP project:

- Had to come from poor families. This was determined by asking the girl-child beneficiaries the occupation of their parents/guardians. For example, children whose parents/guardians were engaged in

subsistence farming were considered as coming from poor homes.

- Had to be using worn-out school bags or not have school bags. The teachers determined the conditions of the bags and the Coordinator of Plan Ghana confirmed the conditions of the bags.
- Had few or no study materials such as books, pens, pencils, erasers and mathematical sets. The teachers provided information on students' school supplies to Plan Ghana's Coordinator who then confirmed with the students.

#### **Strategies adopted by Plan Ghana**

Plan Ghana has adopted the following strategies to help girl-children at Mampong Presbyterian Junior High School. The strategies are divided into three categories, namely those which directly targeted: (1) only the beneficiaries (the girls); (2) only the teachers teaching at the school; and (3) improving the infrastructure of the school.

##### Strategy 1: Targeted beneficiaries

- *Girls' Camp*: The girls were to learn from successful women about their life experiences and achievements. The camp occurred during their long vacations, that is once in a year. Speakers including lawyers, medical doctors, pilots and university lecturers/professors shared their experiences with the girls to encourage them to work hard on their education to become whatever they dream to be.
- *Excursions*: Girls visited places of importance during the long vacation that they otherwise will not see in their life time as most of the girls may have never

travelled 50km outside their communities. The intent was to expose them to government facilities for an understanding of how the nation is run. For example, the girls toured parliament house in the capital city and other places of importance.

- *Teaching of personal hygiene:* The girls were taught personal hygiene at the girls' camp. The aim was to improve their life skills and confidence. They learned lessons including how to dress themselves and keep their body clean, beds neat, environment clean and kitchen clean, among others.
- *Rights of the beneficiaries:* The girls were to learn about their rights and responsibilities as children. After the lessons the girls formed a club termed 'Child Right Club'. Members of the club were to meet regularly and receive more lessons on their rights and responsibilities.
- *Girls' and boys' sports club:* Girls participated in sporting activities with the boys. The overall aim of the club was to expose the girls to sport activities that are traditionally male-dominated such as soccer.
- *School supplies:* Girls were to receive two sets of school uniforms, and study materials including a bag, a mathematical set and exercise books.

Thus, in all, six strategies were adopted - formation of girls' camps, going for excursions, exposing them to personal hygiene and their rights, formation of sports' club and the girls were given school supplies.

### Strategy 2: Targeted teachers

- *Excellence award:* A best Teacher award ceremony was held annually. Pupils vote to select the best teacher and the winner receives a laptop computer.
- *Scholarships:* This is available to teachers studying for their undergraduate degree. The successful teacher gets a scholarships of GH ₵1,000 (\$350 US) for each academic year towards tuition for the two years required to acquire a degree after their diploma from teacher training college. The study has to be undertaken on part-time basis either during weekends or when the students were on vacations. The absence of the teachers should not affect teaching and learning.
- *Supervisor sponsorships:* The Headteacher and the Circuit Supervisor were sponsored to attend short courses at any time the courses are offered to enhance their school supervision skills.

### Strategy 3: Targeted infrastructure

- *Physical structure and environment enhancement:* Several upgrades were made to the school. The project sponsored electricity to the school, ceiled the roof and painted the classrooms. Teachers got comfortable chairs and tables, and dustbins were provided for the use of by the school.
- *Constructing 'girl-friendly washrooms':* Toilet facilities that separated human waste from human contact were constructed.

### **Impacts of the strategies**

Although the teachers also benefited from the project, the primary objective of the study was to determine how and whether the project has directly benefited girls. The evaluation, from the perspectives of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders pointed to the following outcomes:

#### Improved confidence level

The girls maintained during the focus group discussions that the girls' camps, and excursions as well as the Child Right Club have significantly improved their confidence levels. For example, a Senior High School student who benefited from the project for three years reported that,

...before the camp, we the girls did not have the confidence to answer questions in class because we were not sure of our answers. The boys would laugh at us whenever we answered questions. But after the camp, we were brave to answer questions in class.

They also indicated that they had the confidence to compete with the boys for positions such as class prefects/leaders and had often been successful. Also, they were conscious about keeping themselves neat because they were introduced to personal hygiene. It seems clear that girls' participation in the camps, excursions and sports clubs has boosted their confidence levels.

#### Improved performance in class tests and examinations

The focus group discussions and the interview results indicated that the TAP project has helped the beneficiaries to perform better in class tests and end- of- term examinations. The study participants attributed this partly to their access to adequate school supplies. They added that having mathematical sets has improved their mathematics skills, such

as in constructing polygons. One of the girls who did not have textbooks before the TAP project said,

I used to share text books with my friends. I couldn't do my homework because I had no textbook. Now, I have my own textbooks from the TAP Project. I can better understand the teachers in class. This is because I read my textbooks before lessons are taught. Also, I never miss my homework. Likewise, now I perform better in class tests and end of term examinations.

End- of- term examination scores show that there is an improvement since the students' participated in the TAP. Report cards of eleven of the girls showed an improvement in their score soon after they participated in the TAP. They received TAP support starting from their second year of their three-year junior high schooling. The majority of the girls' exam scores did not show an improvement in the year prior to their involvement with the TAP. However, when the girls were involved with the project, there was improvement in their examination results compared with their previous terms.

#### Better mix with colleagues

Not only did the girls' exam scores improve since their involvement with the TAP, but also they associated more with colleagues from more affluent families whom they previously avoided due to a sense of inferiority that they felt. One of the girls said,

I used to use my mother's bag to carry my study materials to school. The bag was so big that my friends laughed at me. This negatively affected my relationship with them because I felt inferior. I began to isolate myself. Since Plan Ghana gave me a new

school bag, my friends have stopped laughing at me. Recently, I was elected the Girls' Prefect of the school.

A girl who was given the two school uniforms reported that,

I had only one school uniform that I wore each day of the week for school. It was dirty by the middle of the week. I had to wash it in the middle of week after school. Often it didn't dry properly by morning. I had to wear partially wet school uniform for classes. I felt very embarrassed because my friends laughed at me for wearing wet dress to school, and my body also itched from wearing a wet uniform. Since Plan Ghana gave me two school uniforms, I wash them on Saturdays and iron them on Sundays. Sir, I am now happy and I thank Plan Ghana for making it possible.

#### Lessening of financial burden on parents/guardians

Giving the girls school supplies relieved parents/guardians from those expenditures and in turn put the money which otherwise would have been used for school supplies towards other needs of the girls. For example, some of the girls reported that since they were involved with the TAP project their parents gave them money to buy food in school. The girls consider having money to buy lunch at school, for example, as very helpful for their learning. One of the girls for example, indicated that,

Because I now buy food during break time, I always understood lessons taught in class. Prior to the project, my concentration was very low after noon because I was very hungry; my parents did not give me money for lunch. I had to live on the little food I

ate from home in the morning till I close from school at 2 p.m.

Also parents/guardians were able to get them other needs such as a dress, a pair of earrings, underwear and canvas for school. A girl said,

It took my mother some time, about two months, before she could buy me a new pair of earrings. Now, I always have earrings on because as soon as the pair I have on is worn out or lost, my mother buys me a new one. The earrings she buys for me are of superior quality than the ones she used to buy for me before my involvement with the TAP.

#### **Parents/Guardians' views of the impact of the project**

During the focus group discussions, this is what the parents/guardians had to say regarding the impacts of the project on the girls. The project has helped to relieve them of financial burdens. For example a parent/guardian said,

*I used to borrow cash from my neighbor to buy books for my daughter, which took me a considerable amount of time to pay, but since the TAP project was implemented, learning materials were given to my daughter so I don't have to borrow money for the purpose of buying learning materials for her.*

To increase the confidence level of the girls. A parent said,

*now my daughter ... can face a crowd without fear. On Sundays, she stands before the congregation and sings which she was not able to do prior to the project's implementation.*

To improve the performance of younger siblings of the beneficiaries in examinations. A few parents/guardians



maintained that since the project started, the beneficiaries helped their younger siblings with their homework which helped to improve the overall performance of the latter in examinations.

Parents were concerned that while girls are being supported to do well in their education, the boys were lagging behind. A parent reported her concern. Her son was performing better than her daughter in examinations before the coming of the TAP. She said,

*Since my daughter was involved with the TAP her academic performance has surpassed my son's. Although I am happy that my daughter is doing well in class tests and termly examinations, my son too needs to be supported so that he can also improve on his performance. This is because although the girl-child education is important, boy-child education is also necessary.*

#### **Non-beneficiaries of the School's views of the impact of the project**

Eight boys from similar socio-economic backgrounds as the girls were engaged in focus groups for their views on the project. They reported that;

- The project has improved girls' interest in sports which could advance their school's performance in sports whenever they compete with other schools.
- The project has brought competition between boys and girls in curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- They wish they were also supported because they also lacked study materials supplied to the girls.

The views of the eight non-beneficiary girls during the focus group discussions show that they had enough study materials from their parents, but were also interested in participating in the excursions and girls' camps.

### **Teachers' perceptions of the impacts of the project**

According to the interview results, the teachers maintained that,

- (i) The project has significantly improved the confidence level of the beneficiaries. And more beneficiaries contributed in class discussion.
  
- (ii) The beneficiaries knew their rights. When a teacher wanted to punish a beneficiary, she asked for her offence before receiving the punishment, which non-beneficiaries from even more affluent homes never asked.

### **Discussion of findings**

#### Selection of the girl-child and adopted strategies

Gender commentators maintain that educating the girl-child has a long-run impact of reducing poverty among women (Arku and Arku, 2009). This study has also shown that the Plan Ghana's girl-child educational project successfully targets girls from poor families. Thus, they assist girls with worn-out/no school bags and girls without study materials. Chapman and Mushlin (2008) study in Sierra Leone and Djibouti also shows that economically disadvantaged girls were selected for the United States-Sponsored Ambassadors' Girls Scholarship Program (AGSP).

Different strategies can be applied to various stakeholders involved in promoting the girl-child education. For this study, the different strategies target the beneficiaries, the teachers and the environment where learning takes place.

The direct beneficiaries who are the girls are not only provided with study materials, but are also involved in activities such as excursions, sport and camps. Thus, the findings show that the Plan Ghana's project is geared towards total development of the girl-child. This finding is different from that of Chapman and Mushlin (2008) in Sierra Leone and Djibouti because apart from provision of study materials, the girls there were not involved in any additional activity.

The girl-child's teachers are also supported by Plan Ghana through payment of part of their tuition fees. The payment of the tuition fees can encourage these teachers to give out their maximum and can also attract best teachers to the school.

High confidence levels, improved performance in examinations and improved association with colleagues

One aim of educating the girl-child is to empower girls, and empowerment occurs in many ways. The findings of this research have shown that 21 girls of Mampong Presbyterian JHS were empowered through TAP project implemented by Plan Ghana. The girls' confidence levels were higher, their performances in end- of- term examinations and class tests have improved, and also their association with their colleagues from more affluent homes has also improved. This finding means that if girls in Ghana and other developing countries are assisted as those of Mampong Presbyterian JHS have been, many girls would be empowered and the poverty among women might well be reduced (see Arku and Arku, 2009).

However, it appears the participants of this study are not engaged in activities such as collection of clean water, preparation of meals and collection of firewood which negatively affect the girl-child's education (see Kane, 2004). This is because the girls did not mention during the focus group discussions and interview sessions that their

involvement in these activities, (as well as other socio-cultural factors) affects their studies. Maybe parents of these girls are concerned about educating their girls so the girls are either less involved or not involved in these activities. Also, since the study took place in a semi-urban community, the girls may not involve in the collection of firewood. Another possibility is that the water sources are close to the girls' homes so they do not have to spend enormous amount of time collecting it.

#### Support for the girl-child and access to food during lunch

Providing study materials for the girl-child can indirectly enable the child to buy food during lunch time. The girls maintain that when the Plan Ghana provided them with study materials, the financial burden on their parents were reduced and consequently the cash that should have been spent on these materials were given to them to purchase food during lunch break. This has not only improved the girls' concentration during afternoon lessons, but it can also improve the girl-child performance in examinations, and also make the girl-child healthier.

#### **Girl-child education and MDG 7C**

The findings of this study show that the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) – 7C can be achieved through the girl-child education initiatives. The target 7C is that a significant number of people should have access to improved toilet facilities by 2015. The improved toilet facility according to WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) (2012) is a sanitation facility that hygienically separates human excreta from human contact. The Plan Ghana has provided the Mampong Presbyterian JHS with the international accepted toilet facility defined by WHO/UNICEF (2012).

### Conclusion and Policy Implications

The USAID Girl-child education project through the Plan Ghana has helped the girls in the study school in many ways, and the benefits are more far-reaching than indicated by a similar study elsewhere (see Chapman and Mushlin, 2008). Also, as having lunch in school has significant impact on the girl-child's level of attentiveness in class; the package should also include provision of lunch.

Moreover, although much attention needs to be given to girl-child education, the boy-child should also not be forgotten. Thus, while more girls than boys should be supported by development organizations in their educational projects because of the girl-child's special circumstances, there are boys who are genuinely in need who also need to be assisted. However, in order to accept this assertion completely, much more expanded research needs to be done.

### References

- Abu-Ghaida, D. and Klasen, S. (2004). The economic and human development costs of missing the Millennium Development Goal on gender equity. World Bank-Finance and Expenditures in Education Publications. Available at [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099079934475/MDG\\_Gender\\_Equity.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099079934475/MDG_Gender_Equity.pdf) Accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2013.
- Araoye, O. A. and Sally, G. A. (2005). Traditional practice and women education in Western Nigeria. *Nigeria Journal of Rural Sociology*, 2(3), 23-27.
- Archambault, C. (2009). Pain with punishment and the negotiation of childhood: An ethnographic analysis of children's right processes in Maassailand. *Africa*, 79(2), 282-302.

- Arku, C. and Arku, F. S. (2009). More money, new household cultural dynamics: Women in micro-finance in Ghana. *Development in Practice*, 19 (2), 200-213.
- Arowoshegbe, A. O. and A. Enoma. (2011). Improving the quality of the girl-child education in Nigeria. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 34(4), 14-23
- Chapman, D. W. and Mushlin, S. (2008). Do girls' scholarship programs work? Evidence from two countries. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28, 460-472.
- Chisholm, L. and Leyendecker, R. (2008). Curriculum reform in post-1990s sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28, 195-205.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Croll, E. J. (2006). From the girl child to the girls' rights. *Third Quarterly*, 27(7), 1285-1295.
- De Silva-de-Alwis, R. (2008). *Child marriage and the law*. New York: UNICEF
- Hunt, F. (2008). Dropping out from school: A cross country review of literature. *Research Monograph*, 16 (67 pages). University of Sussex Centre for International Education.
- Liu, F. (2006). Boys as only-children and girls as only-children—parental gendered expectations of the only-child in the nuclear Chinese family in present-day China. *Gender and Education*, 18(5), 491-505.
- Kane, E. (2004). *Girls' education in Africa: What do we know about strategies that work?* Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Michael, I. (2011). Emir Harps on girl-child education. *Nigeria Tribune*, 15(107), 31
- Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Service (MOE/GES) (2001). *Report of the study on the*

- constitutional and legal framework for the right to pre-tertiary education*. Accra:Ministry of Education.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. London: SAGE Publications
- North, A. (2010). MDG 3 and the negotiation of gender in international education organizations. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 40 (4), 425-440.
- Oladeji, D. (2010). Sociocultural factors influencing girl-child education in the context of marriage in Ilorin environs, Nigeria. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, 51, 339-347.
- Roby, J, L., Lambert, M. J., and Lambert, J. (2009). Barriers to girls' education in Mozambique at household and community levels: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 18, 342-353
- Slaughter-Defoe, D. T., Addae, W. A. and Bell, C. (2002). Towards the future schooling of girls: Global status, issues and prospects. *Human Development*, 45, 34-53.
- Subrahmanian, R. (2005). Gender equality in education: Definitions and measurements. *International Journal of Education Development*, 25, 395-407.
- Subrahmanian, R. (2007). *Gender in primary and secondary education*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Sutherland-Addy, E. (2002). Impact assessment study of the girls' education program in Ghana. A report prepared by UNICEF, Ghana.
- UNICEF. (2010). *EFA global monitoring report: Reaching the marginalized*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Unterhalter, E. and North, A. (2011). Responding to the gender and education Millennium Development Goals in South Africa and Kenya: Reflection on education rights, gender, capabilities and global justice. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 41 (4), 495-511

- Van Manen, M. (1984). Doing phenomenological research and writing: An introduction. *Monograph No.7, Curriculum Praxis* (i-29). Edmonton, Canada: Department of Secondary Education Publication, University of Alberta
- Van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, Ont: The Athlouse Press & New York: SUNY Press
- Vavrus, F. and Seghers, M. (2010). Critical discourse analysis in comparative education: A discursive study of 'partnership' in Tanzania's poverty reduction policies. *Comparative Education Review*, 54 (1), 77-103.
- Warrington, M. and Kiragu, S. (2012). "It makes more sense to educate a boy": Girls 'against the odds' in Kajiado, Kenya. *International Journal of Education Development*, 32, 301-309
- World Health Organization (WHO)/ United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). (2012). *Progress on drinking water and sanitation - 2012 update*. Geneva/ New York: WHO/UNICEF. Available at [http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/resources/JMP-report-2012-en.pdf](http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/JMP-report-2012-en.pdf) Accessed on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2013