
**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
FEMALE STUDENTS: THE CASE OF KUTTO SORFELLA PRIMARY
SCHOOL, SODO ZURIA WOREDA, SOUTHERN NATION
NATIONALITIES AND PEOPLES REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA**

Guta Regasa*

Mukerem Taha**

ABSTRACT

Inequality in academic performance exists between females and males in most parts of Ethiopia particularly in rural areas. Many challenges have been made by the government to avoid the gap between two sexes but it has not reached the end goal. So, the objectives of the study were to assess the current status of the academic performance of females in grade seven and eight and to identify the factors that affect the academic performance of females in the study area. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected during the survey from primary as well as secondary sources to achieve the objectives of this research. For this study 130 respondents were selected by simple random techniques and interviewed for the purpose of the study. Structured survey questionnaires, guided interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions were also applied to collect data. To analysis, data qualitative techniques such as tabulation and cross-tabulation, summarization, categorization, computer software; SPSS-16 were used. Computation of descriptive statistic such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation were also carried out. Further, inferential statistics such as T-tests, Chi-square tests, F-tests, and Binary Logit model were also employed to examine and establish statistical relationship between female student performance and 12 independent variables. The results from the simple descriptive statistics indicate that there is gender disparity in academic performance between female and male students in primary school in the study area. The results from the Logit, perception of family, availability of role model, study hours per day, parental education were found significant and positively affect the performance of female students while distance from school was significant and negatively affect their performance. Therefore, in order to overcome these problems some strong commitment and reformation

should be done in the study area by parents, students, teachers, local leaders, researchers, policy makers, GOs and NGOs.

Key words: family factors, socio-economic factors, institutional factors, psychological factors

*Wolaita Sodo University, P.O.BOX:138, Wolaita, Ethiopia

**Haramaya University, P.O.BOX:138, Dire Dawa, Ethiopia

INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia is amongst the poorest and educationally most disadvantaged countries in the world (Emebet, 2001). The level of illiteracy prevalent in Ethiopia is an indicator of its welfare. The literacy rate is high for male (40%) than for female counter parts (19.5%) of its population (Ayalew, 2005). The declining level of the educational achievements of students in developing countries has been a matter of increasing concern to their governments in general and policy makers in particular. Especially the country like Ethiopia, with less educated man power, very few educational institutions and limited number of graduates at their tertiary level, the educational achievement of students admitted to higher educational institutions is of great concern (Bedassa and kidist, 1999). Moreover, it is an instrument for reducing poverty, improving the living condition of rural people, and building a food secure in the world. In spite of this, children's access to education in the rural areas is still much lower than in the urban areas, adult illiteracy is much and the quality of education is very poor. Expanding access to quality education for rural people is of critical importance in the realization of human rights and achieving the millennium development goals (Ayalew, 2005).

Conditions that influence the improvement of girls' education have been discussed in a number of ways. With particular reference to Sub-Saharan Africa, Odaga and Heneveld (1995) discuss factors affecting female education under three categories: socio-economic and socio-cultural, factors related to the school environment, and political and institutional factors. Hyde (1989) summarizes conditions for improving women's education in Sub-Saharan Africa from four perspectives: family level, societal level, school level factors and factors influencing achievement. Similarly, female students in rural Ethiopia invariably encounter different problems in attending school. Several studies in Ethiopia that social factors, economic factors, cultural factors, school factors, family factors and institutional factors were the stumbling blocks for female's education. The factors that cause gender imbalances in Ethiopia may be inability to buy school materials and home-based factors, which include family size, household income, parent's education, cultural and traditional belief all contributes substantially to poor female performance so that gender disparity is created between the two sexes especially in school in rural areas. As the result of this, females are less illiterate and have smaller performance rates at every level of education in Ethiopia. These all factors interact to each other in many ways. Therefore, the study was conducted to analyze empirically on factors that affect female students' academic

performance and to identify the problems of females' education and provide empirical data for policy and decision makers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Study Site

Kutto Sorfella primary school is currently found in Western Wolaita Zone of Southern Nation Nationalities and Peoples Regional State in Ethiopia. The Woreda is located approximately between 6° 50'N-7°53'N and 37°36'E-37° 53'E. Most of the land area of the woreda is found in the altitude range 1400 meter above sea level to 2950 meters above sea level. The climatic condition of the woreda is similar to most of southern parts of the country. Maximum rainfall ranges between 1200mm-1300mm per annum. Maximum temperature also ranges between 20°C-25°C with average minimum 10°C-15°C. Sodo Zuria covers an area of 481.25 square kilometer. The total population is about 200866. From the total population 99,979 and 100,887 are males and females respectively. The economy of the people of Sodo Zuria Woreda is mainly based on agriculture.

Data and Data Collection Methods

To achieve the objectives of this research both qualitative and quantitative data were collected during the survey from primary as well as secondary sources. The quantitative data that were collected such as socio-economic characteristics of the parents (households); educational status, family size, estimated annual income etc., personal characteristics of the students such as age, educational status etc. The qualitative data were also collected from the sampled respondents by using focus group discussion (non-sample girls by female students, elders in the community, school officials, and early primary school female graduates) such as the perception of parents towards female education, students' perception towards their education etc. The source of data was both primary and secondary sources for the study. Primary data was gathered from the sampled respondents using structured interview schedule and key informant interview, focus group discussion, etc., where as secondary data was gathered from literature reviews.

Sample Size

One of the most significant issues investigators has to consider when designing a research is the type and number of the respondents who will be involved in the study (Sarandakos, 1998). During survey method census method was applied and used. There were 96 total students that learn grade seven and eight and 11 teachers were interviewed. 23 household

heads were also randomly selected and interviewed for the purpose of the study in the study area.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected through structured interview schedule were processed and coded using SPSS software for further analysis. Quantitative categorical type of data was analyzed using percentage, frequency and chi-square test. While quantitative continuous types of variables were analyzed using one way ANOVA, minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation. On the other hand, narrative type of analysis was also used to analyze qualitative type of data and to enrich and illustrate a qualitative conclusion. After computing the descriptive statistics, logistic regression was (Green, 2003) used to identify determinants of female students academic performance where the dependent variable was dichotomous ($Y = 0$ or 1 , if a student performance is less than the cut point i.e. 70 or greater than the cut point, which classifies the student as low performer or high performer).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The academic performance status of the sampled students

During surveys the researchers were investigated the academic performance of students in the school to examine the difference between female and male students. Their result was categorized into three to measure the performances of the students. The average results was 70.22 and thus the high performance indicated that when the students achieved 82 and above points, medium performance when the students achieved between the interval of 61 to 81 and low performance when the average points of the students was less than and equal to 59 points. The results in the (Table 1) clearly showed that the proportion of female students who score low was more than the male students and in contrary to this, in the case of medium scorer students the proportion of female students who scored medium was less than the male students. The T-test result further indicated that there is statistically significance mean difference between high academic performer and lower academic performer of students in the study area.

Table 1: The academic performance status of the sampled students (n=96)

Sex	Categorical academic performance of the students(n=96)			Total	T	p-value
	≤ 59 low score	60-81 medium score	≥ 82 high score			

Female	15(83.3)	26(42.6)	4(23.5)	45(46.9)		
Male	3(16.7)	35(57.4)	13(76.5)	51(53.1)	-	0.0000
Total	18(100.0)	61(100.0)	17(100.0)	96(100.0)	3.791***	

Source: Survey result, 20012

NB: * *** Significant at 1 % probability level. .

Students' study hours after the school time

Time of studying is the foremost prominent factor that determines students' academic performance. Similarly, students are engaging in different activities after their school time in the study area. Even though both boys and girls are taking different responsibilities, their degree of spending their time on household work activities and doing their homework is different from one to other. The results in (Table 2) revealed that most of the male students used more of their time on studying than female students after their school time. This was because of female students had high home responsibility than male students in their house so that the academic performance of female students was less than that of male students. The T-test result further indicated that there is statistically significance mean difference between students' academic performance and students' study hours and affecting at 1 percent probability level in the study area.

Table 2: Response of sampled students for their study hour after school time (n=96)

Study hours per day	Male (N=51)	Female (N=45)	T	P-Value
Mean	3.35	1.91	-	0.000
St. deviation	1.309	1.221	5.557***	

Source: Survey result, 20012

NB: *** Significant at 1 % probability level.

The income of the family

Considerable research has consistently revealed that students' academic performance has affected by the socio-economic characteristics of their family such as status of parents level of education, occupation and income Engin-Demir (2009). Among these influencing factors parental level of education and income has been the major important source of discrepancies in female students' academic performance.

As clearly shown in (Table 3) overall results indicated that most of the female students (70.5%) said that their families had sizable income for educating them while more than 70%

of boys were reported as income of their parents was not enough. This is despite the fact that girls constitute the largest number of the low performers. When we compare the performances of girls with that of boys, more than 80% the low performers were found to be females even though they claimed the income is adequate, whereas only 17% males found in these category. The Chi-square result revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between students' academic performance and their parents' income and affecting at 1 percent probability level in the study area.

Table 3: The influence of family income on students' academic performance (n=96)

Sex of the students	Does the income of your family enough for your education?		X ²	P-Value
	No	Yes		
Female	14(26.9)	31(70.5)	18.136***	0.000
Male	38(73.1)	13(29.5)		
Total	52(100%)	44(100)		

Source: Survey result, 20012

NB: *** Significant at 1 % probability level.

Educational background of the family

In a number of developing countries, the participation of women in education is characterized by low enrolment and poor performance (Herz, 1991; King and Hill, 1993; Odaga and Heneveld, 1995). The researchers clearly stated that majority of rural household heads were uneducated in the study area. Since educated parents are likely to reward education, it may be expected that children who are normally coming from educated parental background persist and perform well at school (Amanuel and Mulugeta, 1999; as cited in Yenenesh Tadesse 2007). The results in (Table 4) showed that from the total of sampled students, majority of their parents were illiterate and only few of them were literate. Those parents who are illiterate they only think about their home activities so that female students were more participating in household work responsibility than their education. However, the result of Chi-square test showed that statistically there is no significant relationship between educational background of the family and students' academic performance.

Table 4: The influence of educational background of the family on students' academic performance (n=96)

Educational status of household head	Frequency	Percent	χ^2	P-Value
Illiterate	74	77.1		
Literate	22	22.9	0.674	0.412
Total	96	100.0		

Source: Survey data, 20012,

NB: Not significant

Availability of Female-Role model in the community

Existence of role model in the community is one of the factors that influence the perception of female students towards their academic performance. As the result indicated in the above (Table 5) from the total sampled female students, few of them knew and appreciated others who succeeded their education from the study area. They had a good role model in their locality which motivated them to have a good hope on their life. The Chi square test value showed that statistically there is no relationship between female students' academic performance and availability of female-role model in the study area.

Table 5: Perception of students towards role model of female in the community (n=96)

Perception of students towards role model of female in the community	Response by students (n=96)				
	Sex	No	Yes	χ^2	p-value
Is there any female role-model in your community?	Female	19(40.4)	26(53.1)	1.538	0.215**
	Male	28(59.6)	23(46.9)		

Source: Survey data, 20012

NB: no significant statically

Household Work Responsibility

During survey researchers postulated that students who spent more on time studying would achieve the highest marks in examinations, whereas those that did the least studying would achieve lower marks. Most of the time female students were taking home responsibility in order to help their mother and boys were also helping his father especially on agricultural activities so that they spent much of their time on different tasks rather than giving attentions on academic issues. Similarly, students spent more of their time on fetching water, domestic work, petty trading, agriculture activities and, collecting fire wood in the study area (Table 6). Generally, the results of Chi-square test revealed that there is statistically significance relationship between female students' academic performance and the rate of time they spend on fetching water, engaging in different agricultural activities and affecting at 1% probability

level. On other hand, there is no statistically significance relationship between female students' academic performance and time spending on housework activities, petty trading, collecting firewood.

Table 6: Rate of the amount of time students spend on different works in the week (n=96)

Time spent on different works in the week	Response by students (n=96)					
	Sex	All the week	Some days	Few days	χ^2	P-Value
Time spend on agriculture in the week	Female	36(62.1)	8(27.6)	1(11.1)	14.332**	0.001
	Male	22(37.9)	21(72.4)	8(88.9)	*	
Time spend on fetching water in the week	Female	33(63.5)	11(29.7)	1(14.3)	13.098**	0.001
	Male	19(36.5)	26(70.3)	6(85.7)	*	

Source: Survey data, 20012,

NB: there is no significant

Distance of school from their residence

During survey the researchers clearly found out distance from school as one factor that influenced students' academic performance for both male and female students especially in rural areas. In the study area majority of students blamed that they had the problem of study hours because of long distance of school from their residence. As the result, female students were exposed for rape, tiredness, abduction, sexual harassment, shortage of studying hours, hungry, abduction, and etc. The results (Table 7) showed that from the total sampled respondents majority of them said that the impact of distance on their academic performance was very high. Further, the Chi-square results indicated that there is no a statistically significant relationship between female students' academic performance and the consequences of long distance journey but for rape it is statistically significant and affecting at 1% probability level.

Table 7: The effect of distance on girls' academic performance (n=96)

The effect of distance on girls'	Degree of response by respondents (n=96)
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academic performance	Sex	Low	Medium	High	χ^2	P-Value
Does distance affect your performance?	Female	7(15.6)	5(11.1)	33(73.3)	1.115	0.573
	Male	12(23.5)	4(7.8)	35(68.6)		
Could girls be raped on the road due to distance?	Female	12(26.7)	32(71.1)	1(2.2)	16.943***	0.000
	Male	5(9.8)	29(56.9)	17(33.3)		

Source: Survey data, 20012

NB: *** Statistically significance at 1% probability level

Perceptions of students towards their parents' attitude for girls and boys education

Even though Ethiopia is considered to have made substantial progress in providing access to education in the past decade in increasing with the enrollment rate then reduce gender gap, however, the gender gap in performance is another facet suggests that the country still has a long way to go to minimize a gap between the sexes. Women need their daughters to support for domestic work, and it also prevents girls from schooling. Moreover, daughters are expected to engage in household maintenance due to increasing pressures for their survival for households' members. As a result, most of the time parents have some biased perceptions towards their children on different engagement of home activities and sending to school. During interviews, female students said that they were always considered as domestic workers because boys didn't give much care for domestic work like females so that parents selected girls than boys. As the result of this, parents always preferred boys to girls for school. This might influence that parents differences in attitude towards both female and male education. The results in the (Table 8) revealed that from the total number of sampled students, majority of girls and boys reported that parents attitude to be positive regarding the education of girls and boys, while only few of them were found against same attitude of parents towards girls education. Some of the Chi square results showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between females' academic performance and their parents' attitude for their education and affecting at 1% probability level but in the results of two Chi square tests statistically it is not significant.

Table 8: Parents attitude towards girls' education in percent as reported by students (n=96)

Statements of	Male (n=51)			Female (n=45)			χ^2	P-Value
	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Agree	undecided	Disagree		

Attitudes (
Parents									
believe									
that)									
Un	76.5	2	21.6	84.4	4.4	11.1	50.824	0.000***	
educated									
individual									
will be									
backward									
in society									
both boys	64.7	5.9	29.4	30	8.9	61.1	78.264	0.000***	
and girls									
have equal									
intelligence									
girls	76.5	13.7	9.8	77.8	8.9	13.3	36.664	0.000***	
shouldn't									
stop									
education									
even if									
they									
married									
Education	80.5	5.9	13.7	75.6	11.1	13.3	39.701	0.000***	
enables									
females to									
get late									
marriage									
Education	68.6	23.5	7.8	71.1	17.8	11.1	77.929	0.000***	
changes									
the cultural									
beliefs of									
female									

Source: Survey data, 20012

NB: *** Significant at 1 % probability level.

Stereotypes may be used by one individual when judging another, but they may also influence how a member of a stereotyped group sees her or himself. This was strengthened with the traditional view of the rural man that the main office for female is the kitchen and which has contributed greatly to the low participation of girls has been changed in Ethiopia while low performance of girls in education still kept particularly in rural areas. Mostly domestic work of females in rural areas associated with their low performance in education. Even if the motivation of parents to send their daughters to school by itself can be an unambiguous indicator of their positive attitudes. However, there is a difference in perceptions among the parents to accept and believe the ability of girls to equally achieve as boys in terms of academic performance. In consistent with these findings, the result of survey indicated that only 30% of the girls agree with the statement which equate to the academic performance of girls as boys while more than 60% of them perceive and believe they performance is less than that of boys and also significant percent of boys (29.4%) was found to be against the equal performance.

The aspiration level of students towards their academic performance

Education is also a primary channel through which a particular identity, set of values, and world view are transmitted. Major purpose of going to school is to get an education so that a child can take his or her place in adult life. Education changes the ways of people thinking, working, managing, making social relationship, understanding the world and monitoring her or himself. The results in (Table 9) summarizes, during survey almost all of sample students reported that when they learn they can get knowledge so that they would change their life in the future. However, as portrait in the table, the aspiration level of boys was found to be somewhat higher than that of girls. On average more than 86% of boys were reported as they have dream, ambition, believe and hope to change their life through education and were clearly understood that good academic achievement will never come without studying hard, whereas only 84.5% of female students on average has similar ambition and hope, so we can say that generally the sampled students have higher educational aspirations. This implies that they know as education changes their life by adding values to their knowledge, skill and changing their attitudes, perceptions etc. The results of Chi square tests showed that there is no statistically significance relationship between females' academic performance and their aspirations towards education.

Table 9: Degree of students' aspiration level (n=96)

Statements of Aspiration	Degree of agreement (n=96)					
	Male (n=51)			Female (n=45)		
	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
Education will help me to lead a good life	100	0	0	95.6	2.2	2.2
Study is the way to improve performance	98	2	0	97.8	2.2	0

Source: Survey data, 20012

NB: Not significance

Self-Esteem of students towards their academic performance

Sometimes researchers refer to evaluations of oneself in these areas as self-esteem, such as self-esteem that is focused on appearance or academic work (Sahlstein & Allen, 2002). However, we will use both terminologies to refer to feelings of self-worth, and evaluations of oneself in particular domains.

Traditionally in our country especially among the rural community there was a popular wisdom that girls have much lower self-esteem than boys. The self-concepts of boys and girls may also differ as a function of various domains, especially in early adolescence. Physical appearance is often pointed to as a particular concern of girls. One extensive study (Quatman & Watson, 2001) of more than 500 adolescents in grades 8, 10, and 12 examined self-concept in eight separate domains (personal security, home/parents, peer popularity, academic competence, attractiveness, personal mastery, personal permeability or vulnerability, and athletic competence). They found that boys had higher self-esteem or more positive self-concepts in six of the eight domains, with no sex difference in the other two (peer popularity and academic competence).

Lack of confidence and capability are one the determinant factors that influences the academic performance of students. Particularly, most of female students in rural community have the problem of having self-confidence on their performance. In the study area most of female students reported that they couldn't be effective in all subjects to score high grade due to household work burden, inadequate educational materials, distance of school, absence of participation in class and clubs. During survey, students were asked to express their opinions on four statements on scales ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

The scale was condensed to three for the sake of simplicity for analysis ranging from agrees (1) to disagree (3). Consistent with the other researches we have discussed, boys had slightly higher self-esteem on average (88.7%) and more positive self-concepts in performance score,

study hard, emotional wellbeing, and having self-confidence while out of girls about (81.1%) agree with these. Girls, on the other hand, had more positive self-concepts in hope of obtaining high status and position through education. Results in Table 10 clearly portrays that in general the self-esteem of both male and female students was positive. To conclude, there are very consistent findings that from early adolescence through at least young adulthood males have higher self-esteem than females do, but the differences are rather small. The results of Chi square tests revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between female students' academic performance and their self-esteem and affecting at 1% probability level.

Table 10: Self-esteem of students in percent (n=96)

Statements of self-esteem	Degree of agreement (n=96)					
	Male (n=51)			Female (n=45)		
	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Agree	Undecided	Disa
I can score more than others	90.2	3.9	5.9	84.5	13.3	2.2
I study hard to score high mark	94.1	3.9	2	86.7	6.7	6.6
I will have high position by performance	82.3	9.8	7.9	84.4	11.1	4.4
I have high level of confidence	88.2	7.9	3.9	68.9	13.3	17.8

Source: Survey data, 20012

NB: *** Significant at 1 % probability level.

The participation of female students in the class room

Class participation is the most determinant factor that influences the performance of the students, however, because of cultural problems most of the time females are afraid to speak in front of large audiences. Though boys and girls are participating in the class room during asking and responding questions, their degree of participation is different between two sexes. Students were asked about the reason for low participation of female students in the class room. This is due to females; 1) they have the problem of understanding the subject matter, 2) they have inferiority problem, 3) they are always discouraged by boys by laughing at them, insulting them, irritating them and so on, 4) because of the background of the family and 5) they when they are speaking in the class room they are reflecting the behaviour of shying. These factors limit the participation of females so that female students are less active participants than male students in the class room and even if teachers encourage them they don't want to react in the class room like male students do. The results in (Table 11) clarifies that out of the total sampled students, majority of 75 (78.1%) said that boys are more active

participant than females where as 21(21.9%) of them favours the idea that females are more participating than in the class room. The chi square results further reveal that there is no statistical significance difference between female and male students regarding to the perception of girls' participation in the class room hence $p > 0.05$.

Table 11: The participation of female students in the class room (n=96)

	Who do you participate mostly in the class room?			χ^2	P-value
	Girls	Boys	Total		
Female	12(26.7)	33(73.3)	45(100.0)	1.138	0.286
Male	9(17.6)	42(82.4)	51(100.0)		
Total	21(21.9)	75(78.1)	96(100.0)		

Source: Computed from the field survey data, 20012

NB: ** Represents

statistically significance at 5%

Model Results

The result of the binomial logit analysis of the hypothesized independent variables which were expected to affect female students' academic achievement in the study area are provided in (Table 12). The results of binary Logit model shows that, from the twelve explanatory variables that were included in the model, seven of them were found to be the main determinant explaining the variations in the status of female student's academic achievement in the study area. Perception of parents to female students' education (PPFE), study hours per day (SHPD), availability of female role model (RMD), educational status of the father (PED), aspiration of the student (ASPS), self-esteem of the students (SEST) and distance from school (DFS) was important determinants identified to influence academic achievement of the female students in the study area.

Having positive female role model in the community through education in their area helps the female students to have positive attitude towards their education by increasing their hope regarding the benefit of education. The odds ratios of this variable indicates that, *ceteris paribus*, the probability of female students' academic performance increases by a factor of 283.790 as the availability of role model increases by one unit. Education of the parents was positively and significantly related to the academic performance of female students in the study area. Keeping other factors constant, the coefficient in favor of academic performance of girls' increases by a factor equal to 68.842 as the household head becomes literate. If the

parents have positive perception about female education in general, they will give time for their daughters to study and not to be absent from school. Therefore the coefficient for this variable indicates that, the probability of female students in performing high result was increase by a factor of 5.323, keeping the other factors constant. Female students domestic work responsibility not only makes them tired but also makes them to lack of study time in the house. Keeping other factors constant, a one unit increase in the value of study hour of the female students increases the probability of achieving high performance of female students by a factor of 4.701.

Table 12: The Result of Maximum Likelihood Estimates of the Binary Logit Model

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
<i>PPFE</i>	1.672	.877	3.631	.057**	5.323
<i>CP</i>	-.110	1.819	.004	.952	.896
<i>SHH</i>	-.554	.700	.627	.428	.574
<i>ASPS</i>	5.023	1.089	21.288	000***	151.837
<i>RMD</i>	5.648	1.993	8.033	.005***	283.790
<i>SEST</i>	1.464	.863	2.878	.090*	4.324
<i>INCOME</i>	.614	.916	.450	.503	1.848
<i>PED</i>	4.232	2.280	3.445	.063*	68.842
<i>SHPD</i>	1.548	.757	4.178	.041**	4.701
<i>WASH</i>	-.853	.791	1.165	.280	.426
<i>DFS</i>	-2.708	.706	14.699	.000***	.067
<i>FSZ</i>	-.195	.199	.960	.327	.823
Constant	-12.937	4.657	7.718	.005	.000

Source: Model output

NB: *, **, *** represents statistically significance

at 10%, 5% and 1% respectively

The result also revealed that the distance of school from the students' residence is another determining factors for the performance of students in general and female students in particular. Because before go to school female students are obliged to perform different house hold chores, as a result of time constant coupled with the distance from school makes them to reach mostly school lately and sometimes absent from school, consequently leads to their low achievement. As the result of Logit model indicates that, this variable has negative influence and keeping the other factors constant, the odds ratio for this variable indicates that, the

probability of female students in performing less result was increase by a factor of 0.067. Moreover, the students who have high aspiration more likely to achieve than others. Keeping other influencing factors constant, a unit increase in the value of aspiration of female students increases the probability of achieving higher performance by the factor of 151.837. Finally; the girls students who have higher self-esteem were more likely to achieve better in academic competence. This variable was found to be positively influencing academic performance of female students. As a result the odd ratio for this trait designate that , keeping other factors constant, the probability of female students in achieving higher was increase by a factor of 4.324.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study was to assess the current status of the academic performance of females in grade seven and eight and to identify the factors that affect the academic performance of female students in Kutto Sorfella Primary School. To achieve the objectives of this research both qualitative and quantitative data were collected during the survey from primary as well as secondary sources by using instruments of data collection like structured survey questionnaire, guided interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions and literatures. To analysis data both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used. The results from the simple descriptive statistics indicate that there is gender disparity in academic performance between female and male students in primary school in the study area. The results from the Logit, Perception of family, availability of role model, study hours per day, parental education were found significant and positively affect the performance of female students while distance from school was significant and negatively affect the performance. Therefore, in order to overcome these problems some strong commitment and reformation should be done in the study area by parents, students, teachers, local leaders, researchers, policy makers, GOs and NGOs.

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