ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 12| December 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

UNDERSTANDING THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL BARRIERS SHAPING SCHOOLING OUTCOMES FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN RURAL ASSAM

Mandira Devi[1], Dr. Nibedita Paul[2]
[1]*PhD Research Scholar, Department of Social Work, University of Science and Technology Meghalaya,*
[1] *Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya,*

Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra25154
DOI No: 10.36713/epra25154

ABSTRACT

Adolescent girls in rural Assam continue to face multiple overlapping challenges that restrict their access to and participation in formal schooling. This study critically examines the multi-dimensional socio-cultural, economic, and infrastructural barriers influencing school engagement among girls in flood-affected rural regions, with specific reference to Sonitpur district. Primary data collected from 120 respondents reveal that socio-cultural norms remain a dominant constraint. A significant majority of girls are expected to undertake domestic responsibilities, which limits their study time and reduces their academic focus. Early marriage pressures also emerged as a substantial factor, with over two-thirds of respondents agreeing that marriage expectations disrupt educational continuity. Safety concerns and long distances to school further contribute to irregular attendance, particularly in geographically vulnerable and flood-prone areas, where travel becomes risky, and families are reluctant to allow girls to commute independently. Family restrictions on mobility intensify after puberty, reflecting entrenched gender norms linked to social respectability and protection. Lack of decision-making autonomy among girls underscores their limited control over educational decisions, further reinforcing gendered disadvantages. While a minority of respondents reported supportive family environments, the overall findings indicate persistent structural and cultural barriers that hinder educational advancement. The study highlights the need for integrated policy interventions focusing on improved infrastructure, community sensitization, parental awareness, enhanced safety measures, and empowerment programs for adolescent girls. Eliminating these barriers is essential to ensuring equitable access to education and achieving long-term gender empowerment in rural Assam.

KEYWORDS: *Adolescent Girls, Education, Rural, Assam, Gender, Early Marriage, Socio-Cultural Norms.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most critical drivers of human development, economic growth, and individual empowerment. For adolescent girls, access to education is especially transformative, as it opens pathways to improved livelihood opportunities, better health outcomes, and meaningful participation in social and household decision-making processes. Yet in many parts of India, particularly rural regions, girls continue to face persistent barriers that hinder their ability to attend and remain in school. Assam, with its diverse socio-cultural landscape and recurring socio-economic challenges, is no exception. In rural Assam, the educational journey of adolescent girls is shaped by a complex interplay of structural, cultural, and economic factors that impede their right to equitable and quality education. Education is therefore essential for adolescent girls as it equips them with knowledge, critical thinking abilities, and confidence, enabling them to make informed decisions about their health and future. It empowers them to delay marriage, break cycles of poverty, secure better employment opportunities, and contribute meaningfully to their families and communities. Ultimately, education is a cornerstone for advancing gender equality and overcoming barriers such as discrimination, vulnerability, and exploitation.

Although national and state-level initiatives such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), and various schemes promoting girls' education have contributed to improvements in enrolment, significant gaps persist in actual participation, regular attendance, retention, and transition to higher levels of schooling. These gaps are particularly pronounced among adolescent girls, whose education is frequently constrained by traditional gender norms, economic hardship, and inadequate educational infrastructure. As girls move from childhood into adolescence, their vulnerability to educational disruptions increases due to rising household responsibilities, restrictive social norms, and limited institutional or community support.

Socio-cultural barriers remain among the most influential determinants of girls' educational outcomes. Deep-rooted patriarchal beliefs often place a higher value on boys' education, resulting in discriminatory practices within households. Girls are expected to manage domestic chores, care for younger siblings,

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 12| December 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

and contribute to household labour, leaving them with limited time or energy for schooling. Parental concerns regarding safety, particularly where schools are distant, or transportation is unreliable further discourage regular attendance. Additionally, early marriage, social pressures surrounding adolescence, and restrictive gender expectations create conditions in which education is viewed as secondary to domestic responsibilities or preparation for future marital roles.

Economic constraints, however, continue to pose a major obstacle to girls' education in rural areas. Low-income households often struggle to meet the direct and indirect costs of schooling. Although elementary education is officially free, expenditures on uniforms, books, transportation, and supplementary learning materials can be burdensome for families with limited financial resources. During times of economic hardship, girls are disproportionately withdrawn from school to contribute to household income through domestic labour, wage work, or caregiving for younger siblings. This gendered pattern of economic decision-making reinforces long-term educational disparities and limits future opportunities for adolescent girls.

Infrastructural limitations impose significant challenges to girls' education in rural Assam. Many schools lack basic facilities such as girls' toilets, safe drinking water, and adequate classrooms, all of which affect students' comfort, hygiene, and overall learning experience. Poor road connectivity, long travel distances, and unsafe routes to school further reduce regular attendance. For adolescent girls, particularly those experiencing menstruation, the absence of functional and private sanitation facilities becomes a major deterrent to continued schooling. Additionally, the limited availability of female teachers and gaps in school management practices contribute to an environment that is often not responsive to the specific needs of girls.

Beyond the household and school environment, community norms and institutional factors also play a decisive role in shaping girls' educational participation. In many rural areas, community attitudes toward girls' education remain conservative, often reinforcing the perception that investment in girls' schooling yields limited returns. Prevailing gender stereotypes influence parental decision-making and affect girls' motivation, aspirations, and self-confidence. Institutional shortcomings, including weak policy implementation, irregular monitoring, teacher absenteeism, and the absence of gender-responsive programs, further undermine the educational ecosystem and limit the effectiveness of existing initiatives.

Given the interwoven nature of these challenges, understanding their collective impact is essential for developing meaningful and context-specific interventions. The present research paper aims to examine these issues comprehensively. It is guided by two primary objectives: (1) to identify the key socio-cultural, economic, and infrastructural barriers affecting the schooling of adolescent girls in rural Assam, and (2) to explore how household, community, and institutional factors shape girls' educational participation. Through this dual focus, the study seeks to offer a deeper and more holistic understanding of the multidimensional forces that restrict girls' access to education.

This research holds substantial significance as it addresses gender disparities in education, an issue that is not only a developmental priority but also a constitutional and moral obligation. By uncovering the complex and interrelated barriers that hinder the schooling of adolescent girls, the study seeks to generate evidence-based insights that can inform policy formulation, improve educational planning, and strengthen community-level interventions. Advancing girls' education in rural Assam requires coordinated efforts across households, communities, schools, and government institutions. Only through inclusive, targeted, and sustained strategies can the state move toward ensuring that every adolescent girl enjoys her right to equitable, safe, and meaningful education.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of low educational participation among adolescent girls in rural Assam has attracted growing scholarly attention, revealing a multidimensional interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and infrastructural barriers. Basumatary and Das (2018) document persistent gender inequality in educational attainment across the state, attributing these disparities to poverty, district-level variations, and deep-rooted societal norms. Their findings indicate that although many girls enrol in school, retention continues to be a critical challenge, reflecting broader systemic and cultural constraints. Similarly, the UDISE+ report highlights that the dropout rate for girls in Assam, particularly at the secondary level, remains significantly higher than the national average (Sentinel Assam, 2025). This trend demonstrates that enrolment alone does not ensure sustained participation or successful educational progression.

Socio-cultural barriers are particularly visible across many rural contexts in Assam. Das (2024), in his examination of gender stereotyping in classroom activities in government schools, finds that rigid gender norms shape both teacher behavior and peer interactions, subtly discouraging girls from participating fully in academic life. These stereotypes influence not only classroom engagement but also subject selection, particularly in science, thereby constraining girls' educational aspirations by reinforcing traditional gender roles. Household dynamics mirror these patterns: Saikia (as cited in Saikia, 2019) reports that home environments in the Sonitpur district, marked by strict control, limited autonomy, and social isolation, significantly affect girls' academic achievement. These findings suggest that domestic expectations and familial pressure can substantially undermine girls' schooling experiences and educational progression.

Economic challenges can be considered an added burden to the socio-cultural barriers that affect girls' education in rural Assam. Historically, the region has faced sustained economic underdevelopment, which has disproportionately hindered female educational attainment (Saikia J.P., 2019). In many impoverished households, immediate survival needs often outweigh long-term

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 12| December 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

educational investments, leading to girls being withdrawn from school to participate in domestic labour or contribute to household income. Government reports and media accounts reinforce this concern: Assam's Education Minister has highlighted poverty and the scarcity of secondary schools in underdeveloped regions, such as tea gardens and char areas as major contributors to high dropout rates among girls (India Today NE, 2024). Additionally, analyses on women's empowerment (CSAP, 2024) emphasize that low female literacy and limited access to financial resources perpetuate gendered disadvantages, making education less accessible and less sustainable for many girls in rural Assam.

Infrastructure and institutional constraints play a crucial role in shaping the educational development of adolescent girls living in rural areas of Assam. Many rural schools lack fundamental facilities such as separate toilets for girls, safe drinking water, adequate classrooms, and qualified teachers (Sentinel Assam, 2025). These deficiencies become especially severe during the monsoon season, when flooding isolates villages and disrupts access to schools (Sentinel Assam, 2025). Furthermore, Sharma and Roy's (2021) study of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) in the Barpeta and Bongaigaon districts highlights widespread teacher absenteeism, limited teaching–learning resources, and inadequate infrastructure in remote residential schools and may considered as one of the factors that significantly undermine student engagement and academic progress (Sharma & Roy, 2024). The absence of gender-responsive facilities and safe school environments further discourages regular and sustained attendance among adolescent girls.

In the context of tribal adolescent girls, additional layers of vulnerability further shape educational outcomes. Gogoi (2022) finds that traditional socio-economic roles assigned to women in tribal communities, coupled with limited access to formal schooling, significantly restrict girls' educational trajectories. Community norms that undervalue female education, together with weak policy implementation, exacerbate the risk of dropout among tribal girls. While government initiatives such as the recent 'Nijut Moina' scheme aim to address financial barriers by providing incentives for girls to remain in school (India Today, 2025), persistent gaps in monitoring, infrastructure, and gender-sensitive support limit the full effectiveness of such programmes. As a result, tribal adolescent girls continue to face compounded disadvantages within the broader landscape of rural education in Assam.

The reviewed literature highlights a complex and interrelated set of barriers that shape the schooling experiences of adolescent girls in rural Assam. Socio-cultural norms rooted in gender stereotyping, economic deprivation, inadequate infrastructure, and institutional shortcomings collectively limit girls' access to and retention in education. This synthesis underscores the need for a multidimensional analytical approach that considers not only individual or household-level constraints but also the broader community and institutional environment. Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to extend existing research by systematically identifying and analyzing these barriers, and by examining how household, community, and institutional factors intersect to influence the educational participation of adolescent girls in rural Assam.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the key socio-cultural, economic, and infrastructural barriers affecting the schooling of adolescent girls in rural Assam.
2. To examine how household, community, and institutional factors shape and influence the educational participation of adolescent girls in rural Assam.

IV. METHODOLOGY

At the initial stage, published reports, newspaper articles, and statistical data were reviewed to conduct a situational analysis. Building on these insights, a qualitative research design was employed, incorporating focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with adolescent girls aged 12 to 17 years from selected block of Sonitpur district of Assam. The study also included perspectives from various stakeholders involved at different levels of school operation and management across the state, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the context. Purposive sampling was used to select participants from public schools, ensuring representation across diverse geographical, socio-economic, and cultural settings. Standard ethical procedures were strictly adhered to while conducting interviews with adolescent participants.

V. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SCHOOLING OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS.

Identifying the multi-dimensional barriers that limit adolescent girls' educational participation in rural Assam requires an examination of the complex interplay among socio-cultural norms, economic constraints, and infrastructural deficiencies, all of which strongly influence girls' schooling decisions and experiences. Evidence from existing research, national surveys, and state-level datasets consistently indicates that, despite policy interventions and increasing enrolment at the primary level, girls in rural Assam continue to face compounded educational disadvantages.

a. Socio-Cultural Barriers

Socio-cultural norms remain among the most influential factors in shaping school engagement for adolescent girls in rural Assam. Research indicates that traditional gender roles expecting girls to manage domestic chores, care for siblings, and fulfill other household responsibilities, directly limit their time and energy for schooling (Das, 2024). Many rural parents perceive girls' education as less valuable than boys', reflecting gendered expectations related to marriage and domestic responsibilities. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) reports that 29.2% of women aged 20–24 in Assam were married before the age of 18, exceeding the national average of 23.3% (IIPS & ICF, 2021). Early marriage not only disrupts schooling but also reinforces the perception that prolonged education for girls is unnecessary.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 12| December 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Safety concerns further influence parental decisions regarding education. In flood-prone and geographically dispersed areas, long travel distances and unsafe routes discourage families from sending adolescent girls to higher grades. Social norms restricting girls' mobility after puberty also contribute to absenteeism and dropout. Saikia (2019) notes that low autonomy, strict familial control, and entrenched socio-cultural expectations significantly affect academic achievement among girl students in Sonitpur district.

b. Economic barriers that affect schooling

Economic hardship remains a major determinant of whether girls continue schooling beyond the primary level. Although government schooling is officially free, indirect expenses such as uniforms, transportation, study materials, and private tuition place significant financial pressure on low-income rural households. The *Assam Human Development Report* (2020) notes that rural poverty is particularly acute in districts such as Darrang, Sonitpur, and Barpeta, which also correspond to higher dropout rates among girls.

In many rural households, girls' labour holds substantial economic value, as they contribute to domestic chores, agricultural activities, and supplementary income-generating work responsibilities that typically increase during adolescence. Evidence shows that girls aged 13–18 in rural Assam are twice as likely as boys to engage in domestic labour, directly reducing their school attendance (ASER, 2023). Under economic stress, families often prioritize boys' education, and girls are the first to be withdrawn from school, reflecting deeply gendered patterns of educational investment. According to UDISE+ 2022–23, the secondary-level dropout rate in Assam stands at 17.1% for girls compared with 14% for boys, underscoring the heightened economic vulnerability faced by adolescent girls (Ministry of Education, 2023).

c. Infrastructural Barriers

Infrastructural deficits in rural schools constitute significant barriers to girls' education, particularly during adolescence. UDISE+ 2022–23 data show that 16% of rural schools in Assam lack functional girls' toilets and more than 22% do not have access to safe drinking water (Ministry of Education, 2023). Inadequate sanitation disproportionately affects girls, especially during menstruation, leading to increased absenteeism and, in many cases, school discontinuation.

Geographical challenges further compound these barriers. Large parts of rural Assam, especially the *char* (riverine) regions experience seasonal flooding that disrupts mobility for weeks at a time. A 2025 survey by *The Sentinel Assam* reported significantly lower attendance rates among girls in flood-prone districts, primarily due to difficulties in commuting and heightened concerns about safety during the monsoon season. Poor transportation facilities and the absence of nearby secondary schools intensify these access-related challenges. Sharma and Roy's (2021) study on Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) also highlights how inadequate boarding facilities, limited teachers, and weak institutional support systems deter girls from continuing to higher grades.

The socio-cultural, economic, and infrastructural challenges outlined above demonstrate that barriers to girls' schooling in rural Assam are deeply interconnected. Restrictive gender norms limit mobility and influence household decisions; economic hardship constrains the affordability of schooling; and infrastructural deficits, particularly inadequate sanitation and poor physical access discourage regular attendance among adolescent girls. A comprehensive understanding of these interlinked barriers is essential for developing targeted interventions that promote equitable and sustainable educational opportunities for girls in rural Assam.

VI. ROLE OF COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTION IN SHAPING THE EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS.

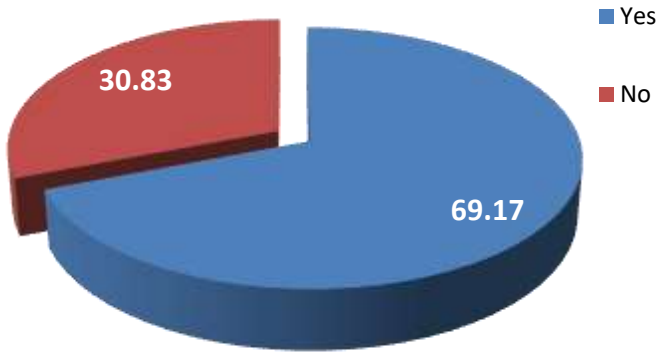
Community and institutional contexts jointly shape adolescent girls' educational participation by either mitigating or reinforcing the social, economic, and safety-related barriers they face. Meaningful participation requires a supportive ecosystem in which community attitudes, household practices, and institutional policies are aligned to encourage girls' education. In this context, the present study examined how household, community, and institutional factors influence the schooling trajectories of adolescent girls in rural Assam.

Qualitative findings indicate that school proximity is a key determinant of parental decision-making. When high and secondary schools are located within a reasonable distance, families are more likely to permit girls to travel independently. This demonstrates how physical distance, when layered upon restrictive gender norms, can exacerbate existing educational disadvantages. Conversely, 30.83% of respondents reported that distance had no effect on schooling, underscoring significant intra-district variations in access. These respondents are likely to reside in habitations situated near schools or in areas with better road connectivity and safer environments.

Taken together, these insights highlight a pattern of spatial inequality in educational infrastructure across rural Assam, where the geographical location of a girl's household can critically shape her ability to attend school consistently.

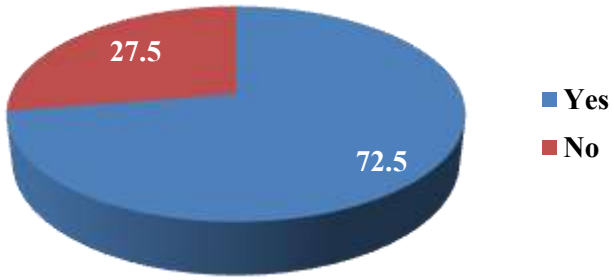
ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 12| December 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Figure:1 Distance of school and safety concerns discourage girls to attend regularly



Overall, Figure 1 clearly illustrates that improving physical access through better road connectivity, provision of safe transportation, and the establishment of adequately distributed schools is critical for reducing absenteeism and preventing dropout among adolescent girls. Addressing these structural challenges is essential, as policy interventions alone are unlikely to yield substantial impact without corresponding improvements in the infrastructural conditions that enable regular and safe school attendance.

Figure:2 Status of limiting study time due to Domestic responsibilities

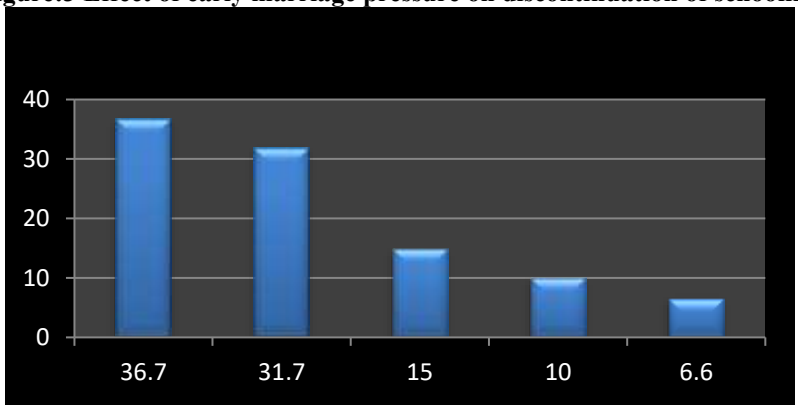


The data show that 72.5% of respondents reported that domestic responsibilities limit their study time, while the remaining 27.5% stated that household duties do not affect their schooling. These findings indicate that domestic workload is a major socio-cultural constraint shaping the academic engagement of adolescent girls in rural Sonitpur district. The 27.5% who reported no negative impact are likely from comparatively better-off households with lower labor demands or from families that intentionally support girls' education by distributing household tasks more equitably. This contrast underscores existing social and economic disparities within rural communities and demonstrates that girls' educational opportunities depend significantly on family attitudes, household structure, and broader socioeconomic conditions.

Therefore, domestic responsibilities constitute a critical barrier inhibiting girls' academic participation. Unless families and communities move toward a more gender-equitable division of labour and unless policymakers introduce supportive measures such as after-school study spaces, parental awareness programmes, and community-based support systems, the educational outcomes of rural girls in Sonitpur district are likely to remain adversely affected.

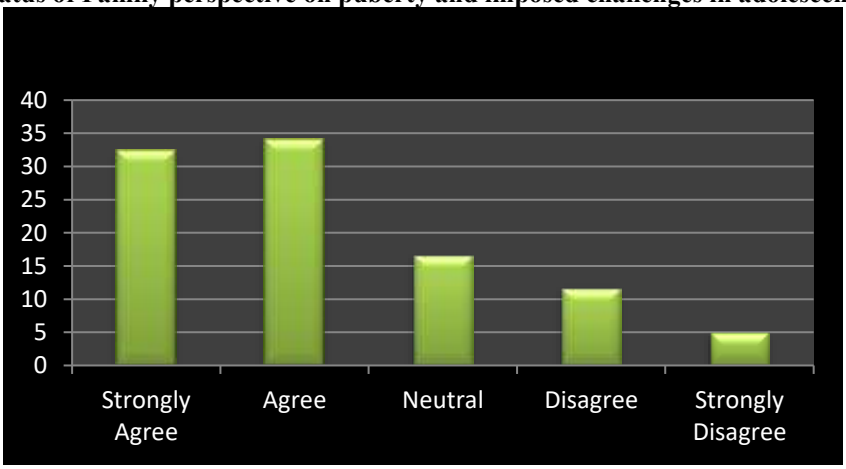
ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 12| December 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Figure:3 Effect of early marriage pressure on discontinuation of schooling



The above data shows that 36.7% of respondents strongly agreed and 31.7% agreed that pressure for early marriage negatively affects their educational continuity. Together, this indicates that 68.4% of respondents view early marriage as a significant constraint on girls' education in rural areas of Sonitpur district. This pattern suggests that early marriage is not merely a personal or household-level decision, but a broader structural issue shaped by socio-cultural expectations, entrenched gender inequalities, and limited educational opportunities. When girls' schooling is curtailed due to early marriage, they are deprived of academic development, skill enhancement, and future livelihood options, thereby reinforcing cycles of cultural and economic dependency.

Figure:4 Status of Family perspective on puberty and imposed challenges in adolescent education



The data reveal that 32.5% of respondents strongly agreed and 34.17% agreed that mobility restrictions intensify during adolescence, indicating that a total of 66.67% experience heightened limitations on their movement. This suggests that dominant cultural norms related to female propriety, protection, and honor continue to restrict adolescent girls' mobility in the Sonitpur district. Addressing this issue requires community-level sensitization, gender-equitable awareness programmes, parental counselling, and the creation of safe and enabling environments that allow girls to pursue education without social constraints. Overall, the findings strongly reinforce that socio-cultural norms remain a major barrier to educational equality for adolescent girls in rural Assam.

VII. CONCLUSION

The present study, titled "Understanding the Multi-Dimensional Barriers Shaping Schooling Outcomes for Adolescent Girls in Rural Assam," demonstrates that girls' educational participation is shaped by an interlocking set of socio-cultural, economic, infrastructural, and institutional constraints. The analysis reveals that deeply rooted socio-cultural norms—including gendered expectations, early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and restrictions on girls' mobility—continue to influence schooling decisions across rural communities. Economic hardship, widespread poverty, and the expectation that girls contribute substantially to household labour further intensify these challenges. Infrastructural deficiencies, such as inadequate sanitation facilities, long distances to secondary schools, and unreliable transportation, also impede regular attendance and retention. Collectively, these factors illustrate how multi-dimensional barriers interact to restrict educational opportunities for adolescent girls in rural Assam.

The study highlights that household attitudes, community perceptions, and institutional conditions jointly shape girls' educational trajectories. Families with low incomes or limited

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 12| December 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

parental education are less likely to support continued schooling, while community norms related to safety, gendered mobility, and propriety impose additional constraints. Institutional shortcomings—such as limited girl-friendly infrastructure, shortages of teachers (particularly female teachers), and inconsistent implementation of government schemes—further weaken schools' capacity to retain adolescent girls. These findings highlight that barriers are neither isolated nor uniform but operate simultaneously across multiple levels.

Overall, the study concludes that improving educational participation among adolescent girls in rural Assam requires a holistic, multi-layered strategy. Interventions must address restrictive socio-cultural norms, promote gender-equitable attitudes within households, and strengthen community support systems. At the same time, investments in school infrastructure, teacher availability, safe transportation, and effective implementation of educational schemes are equally crucial. Without integrated action that addresses both socio-economic conditions and institutional weaknesses, rural adolescent girls will continue to face limited educational opportunities. Therefore, addressing these multi-dimensional barriers is essential not only for enhancing girls' educational outcomes, but also for advancing gender equity, strengthening rural communities, and supporting the broader developmental goals of Assam.

REFERENCES

1. *Agarwal, S. (2020). Gendered division of labor and its impact on girls' education in rural India. Journal of Social Development, 12(3), 45–60.*
2. *ASER Centre. (2023). Annual Status of Education Report (Rural), India.*
3. *Azhar, S., & Gupta, R. (2021). Parental education and girls' schooling outcomes in India. Education and Society, 39(2), 112–129.*
4. *Basumatary, R., & Das, M. (2018). Gender inequality in education and the reasons of its variation across Assam, India. Arthshastra Indian Journal of Economics & Research. https://doi.org/10.17010/aijer/2018/v7i2/125136*
5. *Bordoloi, P. (2021). Cultural norms and barriers to girls' education in Assam. North-East Social Science Review, 15(1), 88–104.*
6. *Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101.*
7. *Choudhury, I. (2019). Poverty and school dropout among adolescent girls in rural Assam. Indian Journal of Rural Studies, 8(2), 51–63.*
8. *Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage Publications.*
9. *Das, A. (2024). Gender stereotyping in schools: A study in rural Assam. International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation. https://doi.org/10.61841/pwf93h97*
10. *Das, R. (2020). School accessibility and gendered vulnerabilities in flood-prone Assam. Disaster Studies Quarterly, 11(4), 29–41.*
11. *Department of Education, Assam. (2022). Annual report on school enrollment and retention.*
12. *Gogoi, P. (2022). Education in rural tribal women: An analysis from Sivasagar District, Assam. Journal of Positive School Psychology, 6(6).*
13. *IIPS & ICF. (2021). National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), 2019–21: Assam. International Institute for Population Sciences.*
14. *Jha, J., & Kelleher, F. (2020). Girls' education and menstrual hygiene barriers in South Asia. UNESCO Publishing.*
15. *Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). Qualitative data analysis. Sage Publications.*
16. *Ministry of Education. (2022). Status of school education schemes in India: Annual report.*
17. *Ministry of Education. (2023). UDISE+ 2022–23: School Education in India. Government of India.*
18. *Mishra, A. (2022). Distance to school and dropout patterns among rural girls in Northeast India. Education Policy Review, 7(3), 76–89.*
19. *NSSO. (2019). Time Use Survey, 2019. Government of India.*
20. *Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative research & evaluation methods. Sage Publications.*
21. *Saikia, J. P. (2019). Problems of education and rural women in Assam. International Journal of Modern Engineering Research, 8(10).*
22. *Saikia, P. (2019). A study on home environment and academic achievement of girl students of rural areas: With special reference to Sonitpur District of Assam. International Education and Research Journal.*
23. *Sahoo, S., & Dash, B. (2021). Female teachers and girls' retention in rural schools. Journal of Educational Change, 14(2), 67–81.*
24. *Sentinel Assam. (2025, February 9). High dropout rate of girl students worries Assam.*
25. *Sharma, K., & Roy, R. (2021). School environment and challenges in KGBVs of Assam. Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research.*
26. *Sharma, K., & Roy, R. (2021). Dynamics of teacher–student interaction and school environment in KGBVs of Barpeta and Bongaigaon Districts in Assam. JETIR, 11(10).*
27. *Singh, P., & Samanta, D. (2022). Early marriage and its consequences on girls' schooling in rural India. Demography Today, 18(1), 33–49.*
28. *UDISE+. (2023). School Education in India: UDISE+ 2022–23.*
29. *UNICEF. (2020). Girls' education: Global framework.*
30. *UNICEF. (2022). State of the World's Children: Education and Gender.*