



Socio-Cultural Perspective on the Education of Girls with Disabilities: Access and Challenges in Selected Districts of Konso Zone, Southern Ethiopia

Mr. Zebeigna Mulatu Amato¹ and Dr. PECHETTY SVR BABU², PhD

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the socio-cultural perspective on the education of girls with disabilities: access, and challenges in selected districts of Konso zone, southern Ethiopia. The study used a qualitative research approach with phenomenology research design. Regarding research participants 13 were selected by snowball and purposively sampling. They were selected from three districts namely, Kena, Karat zuria, Karat town administration, and two zonal departments. Hence, three council of elders, five girls with disabilities, three mothers of girls with disabilities selected by snowball and two zonal department heads by purposively sampling for interview. The data were collected via interview, document reviews, and field notes were used. The finding of the study indicates that the education of girls with disabilities in the study area was perceived as a cost so educating them is not seen as an investment; rather the society perceives girls with disabilities as unable to learn and as a clan of others. Furthermore, participants portrayed that irresponsive parents, economic constraints, lack of awareness and professionals were the challenging factor for the educational access of girls with disabilities. The study suggested that high attention is needed from the concerning parties for the educational access of girls with disabilities in the study area.

Key words: Access, Challenges, Disability, Opportunities, Perspective

DOI Number: 10.48047/nq.2022.20.19.NQ99025

NeuroQuantology2022; 20(19):295-311

¹ Lecture, Department Of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Collage of Educational and Behavioral Sciences, Bule Hora University, Ethiopia. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0287-0929>, E-mail: zebegnamula2012@gmail.com

² Associate Professor, Department of educational planning and management, Collage of Educational and Behavioral Sciences, Bule Hora University, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5103-293X>, Ethiopia. E-mail: drpsvrbabujournals@gmail.com
drbabu1975@gmail.com



Introduction

Girls in traditional societies face oppressions, unfairness and chauvinism. These are not the only factor influencing girls. But, there are plethoras factors like race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability can influence girls in participating in different social activities. The interwoven among the factors can aggravate their challenges to participation (Humphrey, 2016). These challenges can result them in less access to social services including education. Education is the fundamental right for all human beings (UDHR, 1948).

However, the access to and challenges of girls' education can be expressed in terms of different negative socio-cultural factors which are deep-rooted in poverty (WHO & WB, 2011), misconceptions (ACFP, 2014), traditional division of labour, rape (Berhanu, 2015), inadequate legal framework, school-related gender-based violence, distance of schools, harmful practices, lack of positive representation (United Nation Girls Educational Initiation [UNGEI], 2017). Moreover, lack of educational access is more pervasive on girls with disabilities (GWDs) (Dziva, 2018). As a result education systems tends exclude, reject, discriminate, and marginalize them.

United Nation on the Convention of Right of People with Disabilities [UNCRPD], (2013) indicated that GWDs face multiple barriers to realizing their rights to education. They experience barriers to enjoy their educational right due to widespread discrimination, stereotyping and socio-cultural stigma on the base of their disability (Goffman, 1963; UNCRPD, 2013; ACPF, 2014). The intersections between gender and disability and low socio-economic status also have high influence on their educational access (Eleni, 2016; UNGEI, 2017).

Furthermore, according to fact sheet (2021) figure out that over 63 million children of primary school age are out of school worldwide. Among this children two third were GWDs. For this reason researchers find that lack of economic; attitudinal barriers; lack awareness about disability and its cause, negative socio-cultural factors take the lion share. To cite some of negative socio-cultural perspective towards GWDs; as "other" (Domilnelli, 2002), "Hopeless", "lacking intelligence", "being submissive" and "hesitant" (Haregewoin & Emebet, 2003); sick, childlike and incompetent (Rousso, 2003); they perceive as unable to learn (Tirussaw, 2005); homemakers (Zuraidah, Ali & Ghajarieh, 2015); weak, passive and



dependent; bread seekers and having sex with a GWD with albinism who is virgin will cure HIV (UNGEI, 2017). These all can encounter the educational right of GWDs.

However, UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1981) (Article 10); UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (Art 23 and Art 28); Salamanca Framework for Action (1994); Education for All (EFA): Dakar Framework for Action (2000) (Goal 2 and Goal 2): UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) (Article 6, Article 9 and Article 24); Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015 (Goal 4; Target 4.5, and Target 4.8) which outlined that girls with disability have right to education. These international frameworks are foundation to tackle the barriers experienced by GWDs. They are also providing the pathways towards education for GWDs.

Generally, GWDs are facing challenges in their education. They suffer from exposure to exclusion (ACPF, 2011); face risk of sexual violence and harassment, bias (Opini, 2012); expose to drop out and repetition (Drame & Kamphoff, 2014); insufficient learning resource (ESDP-V, 2015); lack of professionals in different specializations to support based on their needs (WHO & WB, 2011;

ESDP V, 2015); lack support (Clarke & Sawyer, 2014; UNGEI, 2017).

The challenges of access to education for GWDs became highly pervasive in Ethiopia and still education is for some (Belay, Fantahun & Missaye, 2016). Education is the fundamental rights (UDHR, 1948). Ethiopia also ratified this decoration; therefore, everyone including GWDs in Ethiopia has the right to education. Although efforts to mitigate the difficulties that GWDs are facing through legislations and policies are in force (federal democratic republic of Ethiopia constitution [FDRE], 1994; Ethiopian training policy [ETP], 1994; ministry of education [MoE], 2006), however, still a small percentage of GWDs benefit from the educational services offered by the Ethiopian government. For instance according to the Education Statistic Annual Abstract of the Ministry of Education [MoE], 2021) the enrolment rate of GWDs was 7.1 in primary whereas in secondary reduced to 2.1. Therefore, this indicates that education of GWDs need special attention.

Likewise, in South Nation Nationality and People's Region (SNNPR) of Ethiopia, specifically in Konso zone, GWDs face barriers in their educational participation. In similar with MoE, the annual abstract of education statistic of



Konso zone educational department from 2017-2019 academic year (AY) also shows that the number of students with special educational needs who have received education in primary and secondary schools in the Konso: primary enrollment indicates that: in 2017 AY, 2277 (1851 females); in 2018 (AY), 1439 (1174 females); in 2019 AY, 1432 (535 females), whereas, secondary school enrollment indicate that: 2017 (AY), 80 (52 females); in 2018 AY, 52 (21 females); in 2019 AY, 24 (9 females) (KZED, 2019). Hence, the above figure indicates that school enrolment of GWDs is still low and decreased in terms of grades from year to year. However, as a worldwide, due to the force of international framework on disability, there is little progress towards education of GWDs. Likewise; Ethiopia ratified most of international convention on the person with disabilities including GWDs. Nevertheless, the issue of educational right of GWDs is not addressed well. As a result GWDs are invisible in educational systems and even those who attend exposed to dropout. Hence, focusing on the education of GWDs, this study was attempted to investigate the socio-cultural factors on the educational access, and challenges, in selected districts of the Konso zone in SNNPR of

Ethiopia. Therefore, the research deals with the following objectives.

The general objective of the study was to investigate the socio-cultural perspective on the education of GWDs: there to access, and challenges for education.

Specific Objectives

- i. To find out how education of GWDs is perceived in Konso's socio-cultural perspective.
- ii. To find out the educational challenges of GWDs in Konso's socio-cultural perspective.
- iii. To identify the possible strategies to be designed to address the education of GWDs in Konso's socio-cultural perspective.

Method

In this study phenomenology research design was employed. In this study, trustworthiness, rigor, and quality were addressed through credibility and trustworthiness. This research was conducted at three selected district of Konso zone (Kena, Karat zuria, Karat town administration) and two zonal departments (women, children and youth and education department) in SNNPR of Ethiopia. The study was constructed with both primary data (from participants) and secondary data (international convention, declaration,



and national laws, policy documents, and reports). The target populations of the study were GWDs. Regarding research participants 13 samples were selected. Hence, three council of elders, five GWDs, three mother having GWDs selected by snowball and two zonal department heads by purposively sampling technique.

As a means of data collection; semi-structured open-ended interview questions, document reviews, and field notes were used. The thematic data analysis method was employed by focusing on the meaning of events, similarity, and differences in responses of participants in relation to the formulated research objective. The identification of similarity, difference and relationships among categories was done verbatim while transcribing to make meanings and narrate the interpretation of the finding. In order to organize, categorize and develop themes, the researcher assigned a special identification code for each respondent's text in an alphanumerical format. For example CE1= council of elders firstly interviewed up to CE3; GWD1 = girl with disability first interviewed up to GWD5; H1= head of educational department; H2= head of women, children and youth department; MGWD1= mother having a girl with

disability first interviewed up to MGWD3.

Among 13 research participants nine were females and four were meals. Regarding the types of impairment: child of MGWD1 (with hearing and speech difficulties), child of MGWD2 (with total deafness), GWD3 (with total blindness), and GWD5 has hard of hearing. Three of the participants have different types of physical disability (GWD1 hemiplegic), GWD2 (with diplegic), and GWD4 (monoplegia). One child of MGWD3 was with multiple disabilities (with physical, hearing, and speech difficulties).

This current study was so limited in terms of scope since it takes place in a very small area, especially in terms of its participants, and is composed of some social groups. In addition, there were some inhibiting factors that hampered data collection, for instance, some of the respondents were not willing to respond to the question; felt insecurity in the study sites; critical shortage of recent and relevant literature on disability-gender sensitive socio-cultural perspectives in selected districts and wide spared of COVID-19 pandemic over the world including the study districts during the time of data collection. However, the rigor taken seriously in the study would enable to transfer of the



findings to other areas which have similar contexts with the study area.

Regarding the ethical issues play a vital role in research process because it includes the in-depth description of participants' personal private information that to be secured. The researcher expects success for his study if he respect, made good reciprocal relationship and being collaborative with their participants (Creswell, 2012: 230). In the course of this study, the researcher was strictly adhering to participants' right to anonymity, privacy and confidentiality. According to Creswell (2012) it is better to tell the participants that "off the recorded data and using anonymity of the participants by assigning numbers or symbols during data collection and analyses (p. 231)". The researcher handled any identifiable individual characteristics, for example giving alphanumerical instead of names. The researcher is the only persons who know which alphanumerical correspond to which names. As well the researcher secures any information gathered throughout the course of the research study, and keep in locked files, by no means to be transferred to third person.

Results

1. Konsos' Society-cultural perspective on the Education of GWD

i. Education of Girls with Disability is seen as Cost, Not as Investment

Education is the fundamental right of all human beings (UDHR, 1948; ETP, 1994). It is also a fundamental right of all GWDs in Konso. In traditionalist society education of GWDs is not perceived as necessary because they are not expected to contribute to the family (Zuraidah et al., 2015) which prevents them from educational participation (UNGEI, 2017). Similarly, the education of GWDs in Konso is hampered by a negative socio-cultural perspective as narrated from the participants' interviews.

The study indicated that the negative socio-cultural perspective of education of GWDs is reproduced from misconceptions of the society on the "need" and "ability" of GWDs. Most of the interviews with the participants highlighted that society perceives the education of GWDs as wastage. A CE3, a 70-year- old man narrated that:

Our society perceives education of GWDs as wasting of their time because they ... cannot ... perform well in education ... because some of them are 'unable to hear' some



are 'unable to walk'; some are 'unable to do anything'therefore they are not well achievers....so ... it is wasting of their time ... (CE3, M, 70).

H1, a 35-year-old male, on the other hand, narrated the society's perception of the education of GWDs as "repeaters":

In our culture education of GWDs is not considered more... the society says educating them is risk full... The society also believes... GWDs are not passing from grade to grade it is therefore wasting their time and energy (H1, M, 35).

The above verbatim translation indicates that the education of GWDs was perceived by the society as time wastage and they have poor performance in their education for they are repeating the same class continuously. From this perspective of the society, it is clear that GWDs were perceived as having no educational performance and ability. However, GWDs in general are less likely to start school; have a lower rate of staying at school and being promoted to the next grade level (WHO & WB, 2011). As a

result those who attend school expose to dropping out (Tirussew, 2005). Therefore this does not mean GWDs have poor performance and ability but level of support, educational consideration and conduciveness of educational system matters.

Furthermore, the data show that the community perceives the education of GWDs as meaningless and benefiting others. GWD4, a 27-year-old woman narrates these as follows: "Most of our communities are farmers. They believe that sending GWDs to schools can increase the income of teachers and reduce the wealth of parents." Therefore, they agree that educating them can benefit others (teachers and schools) and reduce the wealth of the parents so education is not needed for them and is considered wastage (GWD4, F, 27).

From this one can recognize such a societal perspective can affect the education of GWDs in the study area. This perception emanated from the community they live in particular. As GWD4 stated most of the Konso community is farmers and most of them believed that if the number of students is increased teachers' salaries will increase and vice versa. Therefore educating GWDs is perceived as a salary increment for teachers, a source of



funds for schools to attract NGOs, but wasting of wealth, time, energy, and resource of parents. Here it is clear that GWDs in the study area have no room for education rather investments in their education were seen as an extravagance. Therefore the community perceives the education of GWDs as an economic loss rather than as again.

On the other hand following narrations from H2 and GWD1 both were females illustrate the perception of the community for the education of GWDs as “unable to learn”.

H2, a 49-year-old female narrated as:

The community perceives that GWDs are unable to learn because some of them are unable to see, hear, wake, communicate... therefore; the community raised the questions like how they can learn, by whom, and where they can learn.

GWD1, a 20-year-old woman with hemiplegic, also had the same experience about the perception of GWDs as “unable to learn”.

The community says “GWDs as incomplete” and the reaction is different... very few girls with physical disabilities join schools like

me on the contrary none of girls with epileptic problems ever go to school because, epilepsy is perceived as a communicable (GWD1, F, 20).

It is apparent from the participants’ narrations that GWDs were perceived as “unable to learn” by the community is because of the stereotypes and prejudiced assumptions about GWDs expressed as unable to see, hear, wake, communicate and incomplete even some disability type like epilepsy perceived as communicable. From the participants’ explanation, it is clear that the community believes that education merely depends on seeing, hearing, walking, communication and the like. Having disability hinders educational participation of GDWs.

Therefore, they were perceived as “unable to learn” because they have some kind of disability that makes them fail to learn.

ii. Girls with Disabilities were perceive as Otherness

Othering process is which and through which people are dehumanized and denied PWDs personhood and putting them beyond the circle of inclusion and access to social service (Domilnelli, 2002). All participants raised a strong



argument that in the study area both girls and GWDs were perceived as members of other clans. This was expressed by forcing them to marry rather than educate. The following interview narrations of two CEs illustrate otherness as:

In our Konso culture there is tendency that girls and GWDs are believed to be members of other clans. If you educate them they will be taken by anybody and benefit others. For instance, if you invest in the education of girls and GWDs, they do not pay back the cost invested in their education because after they get the job, immediately they will marry and establish their own life (CE2, M, 70).

The CE3 on this particular issue also stated that educating GWDs is like investing in others, particularly her husband. Konso community is exogamous. In Konso there are nine clans. One can marry out of his or her clan. Girls and GWDs are believed to be other clans because they marry anybody i.e. to other clans. Consequently, the community perceives that it is

unthinkable to invest in them because after a time they will become members of other families. From the narration, it is clear that investing in girls and GWDs is like investing in others because they are expected that they take all assets they accumulate in their bride family to the husbands' home including their salary.

Similarly, the researcher's field note shows that when the researcher goes to interview GWD1 during the interview she was sadly crying with a broken heart. She informed the researcher that her father was not willing to care about her anymore and influencing her to leave her home and live with other persons with disabilities. She also said that her older brother had a severe physical impairment and he was also unable to speak. However, her younger brother was without disability and he married. She said "my father so gave 18,000 birr to the girl's family. So that my father needed money to compensate for the expense he paid for my brother's marriage due to this he pushed me to marry".



2. The educational challenges of GWDs in Konso's socio-cultural perspective

i. Irresponsible Parents

Two GWDs (GWD1 & GWD4) were females and one male CE1 raised strong blame against parents, especially, fathers for failing to take responsibility for their GWDs education. This was expressed through their own lived experiences and opinions.

A 20-year-old GWD1 presentation on the particular issue was characterized by strong emotion to attack even attempts to suicide her selves due to irresponsible parents particularly father undertakes.

My mother died about six years ago. My father does not buy me any school facilities (exercise book, pen...). Even when I registered in grade one I learn with my sister's old exercise book. I rank first starting grade one up to six. So I learn only by exercise books that were given as a reward from the school.

GWD4 narrated this issue using her own lived experience:

My father did not only refuse to support me and fulfilling education materials, but also he was always discouraging me to forget about going to school. According to my father, none of his family was learned even male, so he says that grade one is enough for you (GWD4); even he say education of GWD is not over knowing name-calling in edir/iqub is enough (GWD4, F, 24).

According to them, their parents did not send them to school because parents believe education is not important for GWDs by reasoning that lower grades are enough for GWDs. So going to school can interfere with this essence.

ii. Economic Constraints

Situations of disability are also often related to poverty. That reality is even more crucial for GWDs. Girls with disabilities experience a higher level of poverty (WHO & WB, 2011; Berhanu, 2015). Consequently, girls with disabilities have limited access to education, especially in low-income countries (UNGEI, 2017). In line with this



notion, nine of the participants in the study reported that low income as preventative to the education of GWDs narrated as follows:

MGWD3, a 48-year-old mother of a disabled girl, narrated:

“I have a responsibility to educate my child but we are a poor family. My husband was passed away and I am the only one responsible to manage the whole family” (MGWD3, F, 50).

CE3, a 72-year-old male, also narrates his observation on economic constraint up education of GWDs:

low income was one factor that affects the education of GWDs because; if you have a girl with disability and having a low income it was difficult to fulfill both basic needs and educational fees for them. This made parents having GWDs did not send them to schools (CE3, M, 72).

Fulfilling all needs of children was the responsibility of all parents, particularly, GWDs needs the contribution of all however this habit is uncommon in the society which overwhelming GWDs and expose them to exclusion. As elaborated

from the story, the shortage of prosperity, the passing of parents' members (father), and difficulty in fulfilling basic needs also down casted the GWDs from the educational system. Therefore, low income was mentioned as the main problem for the educational access of GWDs in the study area.

iii. Schools Related Factor

A. Distance of the Schools

A 38-year-old girl with physical impairment (GWD2) shared his experience:

I live far away from the school as a result; I did not get the opportunity to go to school. Especially, high schools are also very far and only in the district capital city only where everything is run by money like home rent, water, and other basic needs fulfillment. It is difficult for me to join school since my family is very poor.

Likewise, a 20- year- old him-pelagic female (GWD1) was disclosed that:

“... secondary school (grade 5-8) and high school which is about 7 km and 15 km away from our



home. My primary school is however is near our home.”

Correspondingly, a 50 –year- old female with total blindness (GWD3) was disclosed that: “...I did not get any person who takes me to and from the school because the school is found at a distance from our home”.

ACPF (2014) found that long distances between school and home as the reason for most children with disabilities in rural to not attending schools. In the study area there are many primary schools. However, mostly high schools are found in the center of districts’ towns. Children who complete their primary education should travel to towns to attend their high school usually many kilometers away from their families. Most of the time students need to rent and live away from their families in towns to attend high school education. Which is more challenging for poor and GWDs to continue their education.

B. Lack of professionals

MGWD2, a 50-year-old mother of a disabled girl, similarly, reported that she sends her child with a total hearing impairment to a nearby school and the school teachers teach her without sign language by regular teacher after four years later she returns back to grade

one in Karat primary school found in Karat town administration.

I send my child to a nearby school called Gendala primary school they teach my child for four years i.e. grade one up to grade four, when she passed to grade five then Fasha primary and secondary school was unwilling to register my child. I ask them why they did not register my child then they responded that send your child to deaf school because there is no teacher who teaches your child. After four years again I take my child to a deaf school. She knows in grade one again. Furthermore, she was demoralized. She always asks me that why I learn in grade one I learned so far. But I replay that you do not learn by sing language.

3. The Possible way to Address the Educational Challenges of GWDs

The analysis of the data from this part of the interview revealed varied suggestions made by the participants



include: promoting awareness, role modeling, supporting family having CWD morally and financially by community and government. The participants actually point to all stakeholders' effort needed for all hands to lift up the image of the GWDs in the study. So, creating awareness plays a vital role in promoting educational access to GWDs. H1, 35-year-old male also talked about the creation of awareness that:

mobilizing cultural leaders to be aware of how education is important to all including GWDs; developing cultural rules that promote the education of GWDs; build the capacity of the community, the council of elders, and traditional midwives about the cause, way of support, and intervention to GWDs are needed to be in place (H3, M, 35).

H1, 35-year-old male and H2, 37 years old female argued that change is inevitable in every human endeavor and therefore people should be ready to accept the facts that gender roles are changing in this modern world.

H2, 37 year old female also suggests that

government and non-government organizations are needed to collaborate and work together on this backward thinking toward the education of GWDs to put a message across to sensitize the society about the need to avoid gender biases and the support need to lift up the educational access of GWDs who are a member of the society. (H2, F, 37)

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Therefore, now one, the culture that frowns on GWDs and consigns them to domestic work, agricultural work and as a source of income should be broken. This can be done through education, training and creating awareness to society, GWDs and the community as a whole. The change in socio-cultural structure, attitude and behavior as a way to empower GWDs, which this research suggests, has also been suggested by other studies and reports (UNEGI, 2017).

4. Discussion

According to UNEG (2017) in traditional society education (and subsequent investment) is most often reserved for



boys and girls without disabilities as they are expected to return the investment at some point by supporting the family and community. The finding of this study indicated that the community perceived GWDs are clan of others “if they were married” and educating them is about benefiting others (their husbands); home operators because the home is their center of operations like cooking, cleaning, washing, and those kinds of things, and childbearing. Therefore, society perceives that education is not a job for GWDs rather for those without disabilities who return the investment. In contrast to this finding, education is, however, the fundamental right of all human beings (UDHR, 1948) and, therefore, should be given equal weight in the lens of educational investment to all children.

Literature indicates that domestic chores were their only activity (Zuraidah, et. al., 2015); “Othering” PWDs/GWDs (Dominelli, 2002); tendency to thing PWDs/GWD as weak and dependent; a lack of awareness about children with disabilities in society (Belay et al., 2016) can challenge the education of PWDs/GWDs. In fact, GWDs, in general, are less likely to start school and have a lower rate (WHO & WB, 2011) but it does not mean GWDs have no performance in education. It is

important that GWDs should be equally heard and gets a chance to have educational opportunities as other girls and boys without disabilities.

The report of ACPF (2014) indicated that the home environment, attitude, and support of parents to a greater extent determine the education, skills, and ways of participation. Parents in the rural parts of Ethiopia have low access to education and do not know the long-term benefit of education; can determine the education of children including GWDs. Without supportive parents, the education of GWDs would be difficult. Participants in this study pointed out parents failed in supporting the education of GWDs rather than raring livestock as their responsibility.

For the education of GWDs to be effective and accessible, high socio-economic status should be needed. In most cases, children with disabilities/GWDs are from low socio-economic status (Eleni, 2016). The common thing here is that poverty and disability crates nasty round GWDs (WHO & WB, 2011). In this case, GWDs have low access to education (Rousso, 2003). The finding of this study indicated that low income is one of the challenges factors for the education of GWDs. This condition disadvantages GWDs to be



benefiting from education since there are some parents of GWDs have low income to support the education of their GWDs. As a result, such parents will be given priorities from the government; otherwise, it may be marginalization will be there when it comes to the education of GWDs (Rousso, 2003).

Education of GWDs needs support from all society, therefore, society to be inclusive and support all children particularly GWDs in order to ensure adequate representation of them in Konso's schools and they should be given the needed support to have access to education. To this end collaboration among stakeholders and community awareness on the education of GWDs is important. In line with the above notion, most of the participants pointed the need for parents to provide equal educational opportunities to their children regardless of gender and disability. Not to end, but parents also should have collaboration with other stakeholders. According to Eline (2016) indicated that parents who have GWDs should seize the opportunity for learners to get counseling services about disability. Here, education, should be to all and be affordable so that every parent can afford to send their GWDs to schools up to higher educational institutions. Parallel to this community-

wide awareness creation on the education of GWDs should be in place (Haregewoin & Emebet, 2003).

The finding of this suggested that the change in socio-cultural structure, community-wide awareness creation, attitude, and behavior as a way to empower GWDs can seize the opportunities for GWDs to education, which this research suggests, has also been suggested by other studies and reports (Rousse, 2003; UNEGI, 2017). Clarke and Sawyer (2014) suggested that community sensitization and collective awareness for the whole community about disability in radio and developing professional intervention are essential to promote educational access and opportunity and to tackle educational challenges of education of GWDs. The authors also emphasize that creating inclusive environments: donors and other development partners investing in education programs especially more in disability-gender-sensitive approaches. These, among other things, were echoed by the participants as a foundation for bringing GWDs to the level of their male with disabilities and boys and girls without disabilities counterparts as far educational access in the study area was concerned.

5. Conclusion

Goffman's theory places disability in its



social context in order to show that disability is a result of complex intersecting social and cultural relations (Goffman, 1963). As a result person with disability is perceived as deviant. Such stigma can limit the participation of person with disability in different social services like education. The study indicates that the community perceives GWDs as unable to learn, clan of others, and home operator and education is not perceived as their job. Therefore, educating them is not seen as investment. Regarding the challenges that encounter the education of GWDs in the study area participants portrayed that irresponsible parents and unsupportive home environment, economic constraints, lack of awareness, and professionals were the challenging factor for the educational access of GWDs.

6. Suggestion

Based on the finding of the study, the Konso zone chief administration and its educational department, schools, community and parents of girl is with disabilities to consider the following suggestion would be forwarded in the study area and similar place;

- ❖ The Konso zone educational department should promote public awareness about disability and education of girls with

disabilities. While designing public awareness strategies involving religious, traditional, and council of elders, and local authorities in order to change attitudes toward girls with disabilities and to promote their right to education.

- ❖ Konso zonal administration and educational department establish a council of disability that ensures the educational access of girls with disabilities.
- ❖ Women, children and youth department and districts women, children and youth office give due attention to girls with disabilities via capacity building and advocacy campaigns.
- ❖ The parents should respond to support, encourage and enhance girls with disabilities during their education.
- ❖ The GWDs in the study reflect that the education of girls with disabilities is seen as extravagance and unable to learn. Therefore, if changes start at home and community to overcome this negative view and support the education of girls with disabilities.



Acknowledgement

We thankful to Dr. Berhanu Dendena

Sona senior Lecturer and Researcher, African Child Policy Forum, (ACPF). (2014). The Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Institute of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Dilla University, Ethiopia for his very concrete comment, advice, correction, unreserved perseverance guidance, and supports for the success of this study. Our deepest gratitude also goes to Mr. Meberat Mamo lecture at Howassa Teachers Training Collage for his financial and material support. We also would like to recognize the unreserved effort made by Mr. Gezehagen Gelebo Berehun, D. S. (2015). Psychosocial challenges of women with disability. International journal of criminal justice sciences, 10(2), 173-186. Clarke, D. & Sawyer, J. (2014), Girls, disabilities and school education in the South East Pacific region, UNGEI draft working discussion paper. Creswell, J. (2012). Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th .ed). SAGE Publication. Domilnelli, L. (2002). Anti-oppressive social work theory and practice. Palgrave Macmillan.

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