A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON RURAL AND URBAN GIRLS’ HIGH SCHOOLS STUDENTS’ PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES AND SPORT COMPETITIONS IN TIGRAY REGION - ETHIOPIA.

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Abstract
Background, as a general pattern, female’s access to education lags behind males. Compared to males, females are not provided with equal opportunities at all level of schooling and hence do not enjoy the benefits of education that males do. Societal and economic considerations have increasingly moved women into areas that were historically dominated by men specifically in learning physical education. Purpose, the aim of this study is to explore the comparison of rural and urban high school girls’ student’s participation in physical education classes and sports competition in Tigray Region of Ethiopia. Methods, Study design was a self-completed questionnaire, and interviews which was conducted to the 400 students of rural and urban and 12 teachers from both rural and urban and the researcher use Observation Checklist. Results, Majority of the rural high school girls’ students explain that their participation in sport competitions is low. Their reasons are lack of time to participate in sport activity in the school and the outside the school as majority of the rural high school female students reported that their participation in physical education activities especially for practical sessions are low. Their reasons are no family support conclusions, concerning the problems that the rural high schools physical education teachers’ faces in teaching physical education subject are large class size, shortage of materials, it was found that the rural high school and the urban high school girls’ students are not participating equally in physical education class and sport competition.

Keywords: Physical Education, Sports Competitions, Sports Participation.

INTRODUCTION

Sport is an indispensable part of education system all over the world at each level of studies. Also sport has been a part of the higher education experience for both students and staff in higher education institutions for most of the last century. For many years sport was purely recreational or associated with training physical education teachers. In school sport competition provides enjoyable and organize activities for youth. Student athletes report healthier eating habits, increased parental support, and decreased anxiety and depression. Furthermore, a recent national study has shown a positive association between participating in school sports and lower rates of tobacco, drug, and alcohol use (though a higher level of smokeless tobacco use was reported).

In this regard physical education is an integral component of the total education; hence physical education makes a unique contribution to the education of student. It is the only subject area in school devoted to the study of human movement, the acquisition of motor skills, and the promotion of fitness. It is also concerned with the total development of the individual; encompassing development in the psychomotor, cognitive and affective domains. The development of motor skills, fitness, knowledge, and attitude conducive to a life time of participation is a commonly acknowledged goal of physical education program.

Students who participate in sports were also more likely to disapprove of their peers’ substance abuse. In addition, participating in sports is associated with higher levels of self-esteem and motivation, overall psychological well-being, and better body image for girls, however in developing countries like Ethiopia the participation of girls in sport competition in high school level is highly influenced by different problems and factors such as physiological, psychological, religious factors, cultural factors and other factors.

Statement of the Problem

In real situation rural females are not participating equally with urban girls’ students in physical education classes and sport competitions. The researcher believes that this problem should have to be investigated to achieve the objective. Generally, the purpose of this study is to compare the rural and urban high school girls’ students’ participation in physical education classes and sports competitions.

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited only to Hawelti, Adiha, Mygenet and Debub high schools. Students’ Between the Age of 14-22 girls students grade 9 and 10 and the study was delimited on the following variables

- Participation during sport competition
- Participation in physical education classes
- Attitude
- Methodology of teachers

Limitation of the Study

- Mental status of the subject was considered as a limitation for study
- No special motivation were used during the questioners distribution
- Physical condition, life style, socio-economic status of the subject was also considered as limitations for the study.
- Shortage of time
- Financial problems and so on are the major limitation of the study.

Hypothesis

- There may not be significance differences between rural students and urban girls’ students’ participation in sport competition.
- There may be significance differences between rural students and urban student girls’ participation during physical education classes
There may be significance differences between rural students and urban students’ girls’ in their attitude towards physical education classes and sport competitions.

There may be helpful methodology of teachers that all students are understand.

**Significance of the Study**

Physical education teachers, society, school administrators, and school directors. In order to collect information about the participation of high school female students in physical classes and in sport competitions.

Give some ideas about the trends of participation of urban girls’ students in physical education classes as compared to rural girls’ students in Hawelti, Adiha, Mygenet and Debub high schools in Tigray region.

The study can help to girls’ students to know their participation in physical education classes and in sport competitions.

To increase the participation of girls’ students in physical education classes and sport competitions.

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**Women in Sport Activities**

Women in 1950s and early 1960s did participate in sports much less than their descendents in the 1990s. A lack of opportunities discouraged them, as well as the knowledge that intense athletics were not considered normal for women (Siedentop, 1998:151).

By the mid 1990s, the situation for women athletes were improved and significant change occurred, especially during the 1970s and in the area of opportunities. But it was not a radical change. Equality had not been achieved, and many problems remained (Ibid, 1998:152). But in the 1990s female athletes received much public support in terms of money, attention and encouragement (Festle, J (1996:286)). Significantly, there were fewer ways that support automatically detracted for ones femininity. Going to the Gym, wearing athletic attire, and looking thin and muscular become more acceptable, and even fashionable.

The women’s sport movement decreased the predominance of men in sport but did not lessen the hegemony of femininity. The ad vocation of female sports tried many ways of combat the effects of the restrictive definition of femininity. Girls’ rules, especially private standards, sexualizing the game and apologetic behavior were creative adaptations to an oppressive situation. They were understandable reactions, but it did not work. Generation after generation has tried various forms of apologetic behavior, but these have not made sports more widely accepted for women’s as a group, Pate, (1994:11) as cited in Fekadu (2007). That is no to say that women should have or should in the future adopt the male model of sports. There has been much to criticize in the dominant model. But the way that women rejected men’s sports in 1950s and 1960s by accepting feminine properties, embracing differences, bowing to notion of fragility had serious consequence. Most importantly, it left oppressive assumptions unchallengeable.

According to Siedentop (1998:225) discussed that physical education is a field of action, rules, and of person. The significance of self-involving physical participation and movement is really a planned exercise in growth and awareness not possible in other area of learning. These facts are theoretically known to many people but are not explicitly expressed them or teach them to others. In other words physical activities needs a theoretical framework where ideas can be collected, judge, and then formulated into laws, hence we need a strong theoretical orientation for physical education so that the accumulated information can be consolidated and established.

In our interest of helping the student to maximized, improving our own image, and cutting down the routine and traditional curriculum of the school. The amount of knowledge is not the criteria of successful life but the way in which an individual faces the physical reality of the world and problem of life. There is no doubt that physical education helps the student to interpret and manipulate the external world, offers and educational dimensions to the activity and tire to bridge the gap between school and the physical world (Ram and et.al. 1996; 13-14).

**Physical Education as an Academic Discipline**

Life itself is “physical education” presently it is in the process of transformation to bring physical education in to the main stream of education. The current mood of physical education to contribute their resources to the maximum in helping the individual to achieve a fuller growth (Ram et. al 1992).

These authors further speculated on the possible inter-relationships between physical activity and other domains to knowledge. Besides it has been thought necessary to enhance the scope, status and purpose of physical education and make it broader based. Though there was some exploration of the influence of social, physical, cultural and psychological condition upon physical activities there was no serious attempt to bring about cohesion among the various factors that stimulate human activity and skill acquisition. For example although accepted in theory element or issues like motivation, aspiration level, self-estimation, did not find their due place in the physical activities and programs.

Educators in the field like Bucher (1972:212) argues that education and physical education are passing through a period of charge and transformation from traditional role to modern, purposive roles in accordance with the increased productivity of today’s world through competition and production. Besides isolation and segregation of physical activities has had many unhealthy setbacks like developing an inferiority complex in the physical educators with members from other teaching facilities usually referring to them as a non-teaching staff.

**Females and Sport Competition**

Early school reports for females have been largely unrecognized by historians because competition was within school between students (intramural) rather than between the institutions (extramural). Competition includes intramural, club, and sorority matches, in addition to “play days”. These were special dates when female competed in sports and activities against students and teams from their schools.

By 1936, 70% of schools surveyed used this as a predominant form of sport participation for women (Hult, 1994).

Females’ physical educators were aware of the problems and criticism surrounding men’s inter-school athletics. They were determined to keep athletics in an educational environment for females. In the early 1900s, the committee on women’s athletics (CWA) and the American physical education Association (APEA) endorsed programs of broad participation for women’s (Park & Hult, 1993). This occurred just as the Carnegie foundation for the advancement of teaching produced its 1929 report, American schools Athletics, reporting that amateurism was being eliminated or modified from athletics at school level as schools turned athletics in to big business, the report argued that there should be away to give “Athletics back to the boys” (Thelin, 1994). These views were
uppermost in the minds of many female physical educators as they met to organize a governing organization for female’s sports.

Competitive events for school female students increased in the early 1900s. The nature of varsity competition was in conflict with philosophy of women’s physical educators in the 1920s and 1930s, so these events were still uncommon. This philosophical conflict contributed to a lack of support for women’s varsity athletics.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Methods

The present study was a self-report questionnaire, Interview, and Observation, survey of selected students and physical education teachers in rural and urban areas located in Tigray Region of Ethiopia.

Subjects

It is identified that Rural areas are MyGenet and Debub high schools females students of 200 along with 5 PE teachers, further in urban areas are Haweltiand Adiha high schools were 200 along with 7 PE teachers totally 412 were selected as a subject for this study.

Materials

Questionnaire: A questionnaire is an instrument in which respondents answer questions to statements in writing and is used to factual information. Therefore, in order to collect large amount of data from sample students and teachers within a short period of time, questionnaires which consists of ten close-ended and twelve open-ended questions for students and eight close-ended and six questions for interview for physical education teachers were prepared and administered. Interview: Interview gives the needed information orally and face to face. Therefore, semi-structured interview was employed to gather more detailed information from physical education teachers. Observation: In addition to questionnaire and interview, observation checklist was also prepared to gather more data about sport facilities and materials.

Procedure

In this chapter of the study deals with the analysis of the data gathered through the questionnaire, interview, and observation from different sources followed by discussion of the findings. Furthermore the main findings of the study are presented with the help of. Using percentage, bar graphs and chi-square method with the help of SPSS version.

All of the respondents were selected according to their usability that is randomly and purposely. The researcher distributed 30 questionnaires for both rural and urban female students and physical education teachers. Among them 394 (95.24%) of them were filled and returned while 18(4.76%) of the questionnaire, were not returned. Lastly interview was made with subject teachers.

Data Analysis

The collected data was presented by using quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. For instance, qualitative data are analyzed by summarizing the responses in words while quantitative data are analyzed and interpreted by using percentage, bar graphs and chi-square method with the help of SPSS 19 version.

RESULTS

Result from close ended questions forwarded for Girls students

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>low</td>
<td>very low</td>
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</table>

From the table, the interest of the two groups’ i.e. Rural and Urban students towards physical education, within each group there are five levels from the rural group the total sample of female students are 200 (100%) out of these 11(5.5) have very high interest in learning physical education classes, 41(20%) have high interest in learning physical education, 117(58%) have medium interest in physical education classes, 20(10%) of them have low interest in learning physical education classes and 11(5.5%) of them have very low interest in learning physical education classes.

We can see from the table, within each group there are five levels from the rural group the total sample og girls’ students are 200 (100%) out of these 17(8.5%) have very high participation in sport competition, 39(19.5%) participation in sport competition are high, 101(50%) have medium participation in sport competition, 24(12%) of them have low participation in sport competition and 19(9.5%) of them have very low participation in sport competition. From the second group that means from the urban girls’ sample students their participation in sport competition is 20(10%) have very high participation in sport competition 29(14.5%) have high participation in sport competition, 42(21%) have medium participation in sport competition, 30(40%) have low participation in sport competition and 29(14.5%) are very low participation in sport competition.

From the table we can understand that the participation of girls’ students in practical sessions of physical education classes. From the urban group the total sample of girls’ students are 200 (100%) out of these 7(3.5%) are very high in practical sessions 38(19%) high in practical session, 142(71%) again have medium in practical sessions and 12(6.5%) of them have low in practical sessions and none of the sample of the students were very low in practical sessions. From the second group that means from the rural sample girls’ students their participation in practical session is 0(0.0%) have very high participation in practical session, 20(10.%) have high participation in practical session, 36(18%) have medium participation in practical session, 113(56%) have low participation in practical session and 31(15.5%) are very low participation in practical session.

From the table, we observe that urban and rural girls’ student’s response shows on their attitude in physical education and sport competition. Urban girls’ students from the total sample 200 (100%), 9(4.5%) of them said that their attitude to physical education and sport competition is very high, 12(6.5%) samples attitude is high, 122(61%) samples attitude is medium, 23(11.5%) response show their attitude is low and 29(14.5%) response show their attitude is very low. Rural girls’ students from the total sample 200 (100%), 5(2.5%) of them said that their attitude to physical education and sport competition is very high, 12(6%) samples attitude is high, 109(54.5%) samples attitude is medium, 30(15%) response show their attitude is low and 44(22%) response show their attitude is very low.

As we can understand from the table, the urban high schools teachers response show that girls’ student participation in asking and answering questions, their interest and self confidence, participation of girls’ students in group activities are found on the average level
and they also disclose that they are encouraging them to enhance their participation. Whereas the participation of girls' students in different sport competitions at these schools are found at the lower level.

On the other hand, the rural high schools' teachers' response show that girls' student participation in asking and answering questions, their interest and self confidence and participation in different sport competitions are found on the lower level. Where as the participation of girls' students in group activities at these schools are found at the average level. They also reported that they are encouraging to improve their participation.

In general, from the table, the urban high schools girls' students' participation both in the classes and in sport competitions, their confidence and interest is better than that of the rural high schools counterpart.

Result from open-ended questions forwarded for female students

Participation in sport competitions
Majority of the rural high school girls' students explain that their participation in sport competitions is low. Their reasons are lack of time to participate in sport activity in the school and the outside the school, the society's attitude, lack of sport facilities, lack of interest, no sport competitions organized for them in their schools, lack of support from their families and teachers are the major reasons for their low participation in sport competitions.

Similarly the interviews made with PE teachers of the sample schools have also the same with student response that indicated. The response of all interviewed teachers in the selected school have reveal that the teaching materials, facilities and equipment are not appropriate with the content of the subject they practice and enough to the number of students in the class. Even the minimum level to demonstrate the designed content for instance in Debub high school, there is no enough materials for practicing the content of the subject effectively.

Therefore the shortage of teaching materials and facilities implies, there is teaching learning influences in the school to practice the subject properly and to participate girls' students up to the expected level. In addition to this there is shortage of PE textbook for all students in some selected schools, so the researcher observed that the subject teachers teach by selected the task appropriate for them by ignoring the other in all selected sample schools.

Participation in physical education activities especially in practical sessions
As majority of the rural high school girls' students reported that their participation in physical education activities especially for practical sessions are low. Their reasons are no family support, lack of appropriate sport facilities and materials, economic problems to buy sport suits and shoes, lack of motivation from the teachers, lack of background in the field, negative attitude of the society towards who girls' are practicing sporting activities and method of teaching are the major reasons mentioned by girls' students.

Society's or community's attitude towards who are practicing sport activities
As majority of the rural high school girls' students disclosed that their community's attitude towards girls' who are practicing sport activities are found on the lower stage. When they explain about this, during the weekend and out of school time their families and as a whole the community wants their daughter to accomplish variety of household activities. According to the society, doing sporting activities or any kind of play is allowed for males. It is highly believed that should girls' be silent and stay at home because if girls' are doing sporting activities, they may not respect and obey to their families.

Participation in sport activities inside the school and outside the school
Majority of the rural high school students' opinion towards their participation in sport activities inside the school and outside the school is very low. Their reasons are lack of time to participate in sport activity in the local outside the school, the society's have no positive attitude, lack of sport facilities in the school and local area, lack of interest, no sport competitions organized for them in their schools, lack of support from their families and teachers are the major reasons for their low participation in sport activities inside the school and outside the school.

On the other hand, majority of the urban high school students' opinion towards their participation in sport activities inside the school and outside the school is also low. Their reasons are lack of interest, lack of time to participate in sport activity, the society's have no positive attitude, home distance from the local area sport facilities, no enough sport competitions organized for them in their schools and locals and lack of support from their families are the major reasons for their low participation in sport activities inside the school and outside the school.

Concerning chances given by teachers in learning and practicing the discipline both in physical education class and in sport competition
Most of the rural high school students' response shows that their physical education teachers are not giving them equal chances with males. They further explained that especially during practical classes more chance is given for male students; like to be the leader of the group, to demonstrate activities in front of the students, to answer questions, to collect materials from the field and to take into store, and also sometimes sport competitions are prepared for males only. So female students believed that not only special support is not given but also equal chances with males are not also given by their teachers.

Female students' awareness towards physical education and sport competition
Most of the rural high school students' responses show that their awareness to physical education and sport competitions is low. Their reasons are poor background in the field, poor method of teaching, shortage of materials/facilities are the major reasons cited by them.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS
Majority of the rural high school girls' students' respond that their home is found far from their school. They also explained that because of the distance they become physically tired and their interest especially to practical physical education class is low. In addition, since their home is far from school they could not go back to school in their free time and the weekend to participate in different sporting activities and Most of the rural high school girls' students' respond disclose that their parents are not literate and even many of them said that their parents are totally illiterate. When they explain about the influence of their parents' educational background to their participation in physical education class and sport competitions; parents are not willing to buy sport suits, forced to do many household activities and due to this lack of free time to read as well as to participate in sport, families lack awareness about the importance of
There may be significance differences between rural students and urban students’ participation in sport competitions. From this investigation the result formulate urban from total of 200(100%) from these 157(75%) of high school female students are high participation in sport competition, from the second group of rural students of the total of 200(100%) out of 94(45.5%) have high to participation in sport competitions. From this the researcher understand that urban students have more participation in sport competition than rural students. Result from the Pearson Chi-Square show that there was significantly difference in participation in sport competition in urban and rural high schools there for the hypothesis was rejected B/c the p-value is 0.000

**Hypothesis 2:** There may be significance differences between rural students and urban students’ participation during physical education classes. The participation of female in urban and rural high school during physical education classes especially in practical sessions from the total respondents of 200(100%) of urban girls’ 187(93.5%) are good in practical sessions but in rural high school students sample of 200(100%)of these 56(28%) are good in practical in practical session. From this we consider that the participation of urban students greater than the participation rural students in physical education classes especially in practical session’s therefore the hypothesis was accepted. B/c the p-value is 0.000.

**Hypothesis 3:** There may be significance differences between rural students and urban Female students’ in their attitude towards physical education classes and sport competitions. One of the variables under this study is attitudes towards physical education and sport competitions’ when we compare ‘girls’ attitude from the total sample population urban high schools 148(74%) have good attitudes towards physical education and sport competition. but in rural high school students 126(63%) have good attitudes towards physical education and sport competitions. From this we understand that the attitude of girls’ students in physical education and sport competitions were high in comparing with urban high school students there for the hypothesis was accepted. B/c Pearson Chi-Square, 0.15

**Hypothesis 5:** There may be helpful methodology of teachers that all students are understand. The majority 198(54%) of the respondent from urban students replied that, their PE teachers are not use clear and appropriate teaching methods that all students can be able to understand and 135(67.5%) rural students replied that, their PE teachers are not use clear and appropriate teaching methods that all students can be able to understand easily. From the result of Pearson chi-square show that there is significantly difference b/n rural and urban high schools in methodology of teachers there for the hypothesis was accepted.

**References**

14) Sidentop, Darly (1998), introduction to physical education. Fitness and sport (3rd ed.), by Mayfield publishing company USA.

**Table 1** Respondents’ interest of learning physical education classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is your interest in learning physical education classes?</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
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<td>Vh</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
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**Table 2** Girl’s participation in sport competition

<table>
<thead>
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<th>How is your participation in sport competition?</th>
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<th>Urban</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.5</td>
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</table>
Table 3: Girls’ participation in physical education classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
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<td>Vh</td>
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<td>L</td>
<td>Vh</td>
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<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>113</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>Percent</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>71</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Attitudes of girls’ students towards physical education classes and sport competitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rural</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
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<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>Percent</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>61</td>
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</table>

Table 5: Teachers’ response regarding the activities of girls’ students in physical education class and sport competition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>girls’ students participation in asking and answering questions and forward ideas in the class and in the field</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls’ Students’ interest and self confidence to be successful in physical education class and sport competition.</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement of teachers to students girls’ success in theory and practical activities when compared to male counterpart</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>14.29</td>
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<td>14.29</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of girls’ student in group activities</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>57.16</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation of girls’ student in different sport competition</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>42.85</td>
<td>57.14</td>
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<td>Frequency</td>
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