



Causes of Education Imbalance between Boys and Girl-Child in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study was carried out to investigate the causes of imbalances in Education of girls and boys in Maiduguri Metropolis. One hundred respondents were administered questionnaire while some few respondents most especially the illiterate girl-child and parents were interviewed. Respondents were selected through random sampling technique tables and simple percentage were used in analysing the questionnaire. Results of the study revealed that the factors militating against the girl-child education include socio-cultural, economic, religion and environmental gender parity. It was recommended that girl-child education should be made free from primary school to the University level in which case she can contribute a token and parenting attached to parent who remove their daughters from amongst others.*

Keywords:

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Introduction

The term 'education' may connote different things to different people, some have indeed postulated as in Buba (2004), NNO (2008) that the interpretation of education varied. This is perhaps basically why the definition of education is as many as the number of people who tried to define it. Gwarjiko (1999) as in Modu (1992) looked at the concept of education in a more dynamic and wide perspective. To him, education involves the inculcation of knowledge, skills and attitude within and outside the final school system, all geared towards the development of a person's mind and personality so as to be able to contribute to the development of his society and to be useful to himself.

Herst (1969) and Usman (2003) defined as all concerned with the development of the national mind. Most of the aforementioned definition of education tend to elucidate on one attribute of education, which over the years has been used to describe an educated person, that distinguishing factor is literacy, it is the ability to read and write and to decide scientific and arithmetic symbols into ordinary understandable language. The girl-child according to

Gwarjiko (1999) is a daughter-child in the family and society, she is the mother of tomorrow. The girl-child is limited to those female children who fall within the age category of anything less than 17 or 18 years.

Marguwath (1992) observed that in many parts of Arica, parents do not willingly educate their daughters on the assumptions that they will eventually become the property of the men they marry. They are therefore, considered a poor investment. In spite of the apparent disparity between men and women and the marginalization, educated women have nonetheless shown surprising enterprise. They are involved in producing and contributing more to the family income and saddled with added responsibilities of bringing up children who ultimately become the leaders of tomorrow.

Moda (1992) in agreement with the article of the 2nd Development Decade of the United Nations General Assembly that high population capacity cannot be attained without involving the large number of farmers and distributors of goods who are essentially women. A more equitable distribution of wealth and income is not possible without the involvement of women, who are often responsible for the welfare of children and relations either by customs due to male migration or due to separation in supporting the need to enhance considerably women capacity in each of their all-important roles through improved access and equality of opportunity unencumbered by discriminate practices.

Ellen (1986) as in Moda (1992) stated “the mother is the most precious possession of the nation. So, precious that society advances its highest well being when it protects and enhances the functions of the mother”. Hence, one cannot but agree again with the belief of Marguwath (1992) that being liberating force to individual and to society, basic education remains a means of raising people’s consciousness about the oppressive structures within which they live. It also empowers them to organize themselves in order to change existing realities.

Fafunwa (1974) stated that when you educate a man you educate an individual but when you educate a women you educate a nation:. In the field of education, Solomon (2002) was of the view that more than 50% of the teachers in Nigeria are women, they impact knowledge, skills and values to pupils who will in future be teachers of tomorrow.

Several studies carried out by scholars reveal several factors militating against the education of the girl-child, for example, Goodluck and Odara (2021) in their study reveals the factors as poverty, teenage pregnancy, early marriage, religion, misconception and social cultural patterns and others are factors that militate against the education of the girl-child. To eradicate such factors, they advise that there must be an advocacy programmes, one which must be through the library.

Another study by Agusiobo (2018) reveals that 10 million (10m) kids are out of school in Nigeria with 60% girls and the factors for such as economic, social-cultural and government factors, making the drop-out girls vulnerable to insurgency effect and abuses by men and

others. Various recommendations were given to deal with the issues which include gender-equality sustainability, better funding for girl-child education and also empowerment skills to them and ensuring the girls complete their schools.

In a similar study by Sambo, (2012) also examines similar factors that lead to little or no support to girl-child education by parents in selected local government areas of Kaduna State. The study reveals financial income of parents and influence of parental education background. Another study tag “empowerment of women for self-reliance which in the focus of Alonge et al (2014) examine the sad position of women girl-child in Nigeria who form an integral part of Nigeria development. They highlighted poverty as stumbling blocks to the girl-child education. They suggested that if poverty is drastically reduced, it can have a positive effect on the economy, cultural, social and political development of the country, likewise, attention be given to adult illiterate women. This could enhance the education of the girl-child.

The present study is aimed at investigating the causes of imbalances in education of girls and boys in Maiduguri Metropolis.

Methodology

The study is a survey research conducted within Maiduguri Metropolis. Maiduguri Metropolis, the area of study is in central part of Borno State within the capital city. It lies within longitude 13°E 30’N and 12° North with temperature ranging from 39°C during the summer days. In cold harmmatan period, the temperature drops to about 10°C, however, it varies and may reach up to about 22°C. The period of rainfall within the city is five (5) months from June to October and relief of area is fairly flat, while the type of soil that exists in the study area is mostly sandy, loamy soil. However, clay soil exists in some area, which is not capable of absorbing water making the area to be water-logged during the wet season. The dominant tribe within the Metropolis are the Kanuri’ with their rich cultural heritage. Then we have the Shuwa-Arab who speak Arabic language, the Babur/Bura rich in oral tradition and the second largest ethnic group mostly inhabit Biu Emirate in the Southern part of the State distinct in language and culture.

To achieve the basic objective of the study, the instruments used in the research are both the secondary and primary data and oral interview. The secondary data used the review of related literature by different authors on the subject matter of the study. While the primary data used questionnaire which were distributed to the respondents. The questionnaire were designed to consider some factors which include religion, socio-cultural, economic and environmental factors. Two separate questionnaire were designed; one aspect to the parents, the other to the girl-child. The open-ended questionnaire method and the alternative Yes or No was adopted, because it is believed that through such a method reliable information can be generated. One hundred (100) questionnaires were administered to the parents and the girl-child through the random sampling technique; forty to the parents and sixty to the girl-child. The data collected was analysed by the use of simple statistical tables.

Results

The study revealed that 78% of the respondents prefer to educate the male child (Table 1) reasons given were religion. Tale 2 (88%) socio-cultural (93%) table 3 and economic factor (70%) Table 4. The study noted that 63% (25) of the respondents (Table 5) prefer to give our the girl-child in marriage without western education.

Table: Gender parity plays a significant role in the imbalances of the girl-child education.

S/N	Variables	No. of Responses		Total
		Yes (%)	No (%)	
A	Response by Parent			
1.	Preference to educate the male	31 (78)	9 (22)	40 (100)
B	Reasons			
2.	Religious belief against girl-child education	35 (88)	5 (12)	40 (100)
3.	Socio-cultural Belief	33 (83)	7 (17)	40 (100)
4	Response on economic factor	28 (70)	12 (30)	40 (100)
5.	Preference to give out the girl-child in marriage without proper western education	25 (63)	15 (37)	40 (100)
C.	Responses to Questionnaire by Girl-Child			
6.	Religious belief against girl-child education	40 (67)	20 (33)	60 (100)
7	Economic factors	45 (75)	15 (25)	60 (100)
8.	Culture affecting the girl-child education	43 (72)	17 928)	60 (100)
9.	Response on parent preferring to educate the male child	40 (67)	20 (33)	60 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Discussion

This research finding reveal that many factors are militating against the girl-child education in Maiduguri Metropolis, apart from socio-cultural, economic, religious belief and environmental factor, it was also discovered that gender parity is also another factor. Some parents prefer to educate the male-child with the little resources they have and neglecting the girl-child. Their reason is not far from the belief that the male-child will be the head of the family bearing a lot of responsibilities and in turn be the husband of the girl-child and shoulders her responsibilities. Other parents who filled the questionnaire have a different view according to them, the above factors mentioned do not deter them from sending the girl-child to school while majority hold the view that it does.

On the part of the girl-child some of the girls interviewed alongside with those who answered the questionnaires hold the same view with that of the parents, that socio-cultural, economic, religious beliefs, environmental factors and gender parity have affected their non-attainment of higher education. According to the disadvantaged girls after or during their secondary days they only go to Islamiya School and stop there. Those who are privileged to go higher have to get married first. While other groups of the girl-child have different view according to them the factors mentioned do not militate against their western education. Other few groups of the disadvantage girls according to them, their parents are the poor ones as such they can only stop at the secondary level with their education career.

Another group of the disadvantage girls who were interviewed follow their peer groups and prefer to go hawking or trading to contribute their quota during their wedding. It was also found out that some of the girls prefer marriage to schooling because of their counterpart and also because the parents see that as the best for them while other few groups of the girls do not share in the same view.

In the course of the study, it was also discovered that the attitude of some parents toward the girl-child is now changing, they are now beginning to come to terms with the reality that if the girl-child is educated she will be able to take care of herself, be a better mother of tomorrow and also be self-reliant and likewise made a meaningful contribution to the economic development of her country.

Conclusion

The girl-child education is imbalanced due to a lot of factors militating against the education which have been outlined in the research findings and this was discovered through data collected through the use of primary and secondary sources and related literatures.

Recommendations

From the finding, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Girl-child education should be made free from primary school to the university level. She should be made to pay a little token. This will take care of economic factor militating against her education.
- ii. Penalty should be attached to parent who remove their daughter in secondary school for marriage and it should be enacted as a law and strictly adhered to through fines and jail term.
- iii. Apart from government, the community, opinion leaders, NGOs and parents, likewise religious leaders should be involved in massive campaign and enlightenment program in regard to the need for the girl-child education.
- iv. Parents need to be enlightened that gender parity is not the way forward. Girls should be given equal opportunity to western education as their male counterpart. And they should be made to realize that if they educate the male child, they are educating an individual but if they educate the female child they are educating the nation.

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