



Perceived Constraints of Girl Child Education in Bauchi State: Implications for Inclusive Education

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ABSTRACT

This research was on the educational administrators' perception of constraints against girl-child education in Bauchi state. Specifically, the study identified, interpreted and understood the causes and effects of constraints against girl-child education in schools in Bauchi state. The study was conducted solely with the purpose of findings the attitude of the general public on school dropout of girl-child, the effect of government discouraging the practice, and the effect of the practice on the nation's political and economic terrains. However, recommendations have been given at the end of this research work, with the view that government will ensure that their programmes' orientation be properly channeled to get to the grassroots, and should also introduce school curriculum topics on school dropout and its effects on the Nigerian girl-child.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is generally viewed as a positive force with a wide-ranging impact on society and human development. This force is more unique for the girl-child who is seen as the child today, but who later becomes a woman and also a mother. As often said; educating a girl means educating the whole family. And what is true of families is also true of communities and ultimately the whole nation (UNICEF, 2004). Bellamy (2013) stated that there could be no positive significant or sustainable transformation in societies and impact on poverty reduction until girls received the quality basic education they need to take their rightful place as equal partners in development. In Summary, therefore, a Girl Child Education refers to an educational programme which provides ample opportunities for girls to enrol, attend and complete their education without any form of discrimination.

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educational programme which provides ample opportunities for girls to enrol attend and complete their education without any sense of discrimination. Although, it is affirmatively stated in the world summit in Copenhagen in 2007 that; we will ensure full and equal access to education for girls and women recognizing that investing in women's education is the key element in achieving social equality, higher productivity and social returns in terms of health, lower infant mortality and the reduced need for high fertility (Abama & Mangvwat, 2017).

Unfortunately, despite this commitment to female education and girls, in particular, there seem to be constraints militating against girls' education pursuits in Nigeria and the northern region in particular. It was expressed by UNICEF (2017) that children below 15 years covered 45 per cent of the country's population in Nigeria. The same population does not attend secondary school with the northern region recording the lowest attendance of girls especially; the same source said about 4.7 million women of secondary age are still not in school. Observations show that a lot of times the girls who enrolled in school dropped out without completing theirs. This makes the stride toward

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reducing if not eradicating illiteracy in the country a continuing task which may have no end. In Nigeria (2017), UNICEF reported that the retention of children in schools is a serious challenge to ensuring access to education by all children. It stated that 54% of children enrolled on primary school to junior secondary school, 46% were left out and the ratio of enrollment by gender is 1 girl to 2 boys and 1 girl to 3 boys in some states (Udiugwome, 2014).

It is believed in Africa and of course in some parts of Nigeria that most parents give preferential treatment to boys, especially in matters concerning education. It is really so sad that up till now in some societies, girls are still made to live in their shadows, denied education and another right, and socially exploited so much that their rights to attend womanhood before going into childbearing are being aborted and abused. In a situation, when they are allowed to attend school, a good number of them are later withdrawn for one reason or another before or without completing school. The popular adage "if you educate a man you educate an individual but you educate a woman you educate a nation because literacy has the power to acquire the essential skills, knowledge and attitude to move the nation forward. The education given to a female child who eventually grows up into a woman at marriage has a lot of benefits to not only her person but the nation to which she is a citizen. Perhaps, this is why voices have been made for female folks by civil society organisations at different times to ensure that the girl-child is given the space to acquire qualitative education to help deliver their expected services well (Martina & Saleh, 2014).

It is important to educate the girl child in every society; the enrollment of female students in secondary schools in Bauchi state is low. Despite the effort made by the government, both at the local and state level, enrollment of girls' child in secondary schools in Bauchi state is still low. It was based on this that the United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) has advocated investment in girl's education as a way for all children to fulfill their right to a quality basic education. Also, due to high number of school dropout of girls in Alkaleri/Kirfi local government areas, UNICEF have been

investigating the causes and attributed this to so many factors (Saleh & Kwache, 2015)

Girl child dropouts of schools have been found to be at a very high rate in Asian, Africa Continents, even Latin America. The research work done by WOTCLEE, UNICEF and the ministry of education revealed that the future of Nigeria is being endangered as more than 50% Nigerians active population are derived of education as they are given out for school distance, economic hardship, and marriage at a very early age. Meanwhile, the purpose of this research is to look at the situation of girl child dropouts of school, its effect on education of the girl child and then proffering avenues to reduce to the barest minimum, the idea of school dropouts of girl child in our society.

The school dropouts of female child in Bauchi state is a problem because the equal opportunity is not guarantee in that situation of giving the desire education for all, and also the philosophy of girl child is not achieved, rather than solving immediate conservative desires. By so doing that, the girl women tend to have poor or inadequate education. The female students' enrollment in secondary schools in Bauchi state tends to be low compared with their male counterparts due to school dropout of the girl children, given the above; the fear is that if the recent situation persists, it will set the girl child in affected communities backwards (Garba, 2013). The intention of this study is to empirically investigate the correlate of school dropout of the girl child in Alkaleri/Kirfi local government areas. For this, the researcher can confidently established the rooted causes and effects of this malady.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to investigate the perceived constraints against of school dropout on girl child education in secondary school in Bauchi metropolis of Bauchi local government areas of Bauchi state. The study specifically was;

1. To find out the perception of educational administrators on child labour against girl child education in secondary schools.



2. To find out the perception of educational administrators on economic hardship against girl child education in secondary schools.
3. To find out the perception of educational administrators on school distance against girl child education in secondary schools.

Research Questions

The research question intended to seek out the constraints responsible for the low enrollment and drop out of girl child in secondary schools due to child labour, economic hardship and school distance. The study was to answer the following research questions in line with the objectives of the study;

1. To what extent, do educational administrators perceive child labour against girl child education in secondary schools?
2. To what extent, do educational administrators perceive economic hardship against girl child education in secondary schools?
3. To what extent, do educational administrators perceive school distance cause attrition on girl child education in secondary school?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research was used to carry out this study. The research was designed to elicit information aim at establishing the constraints against girl child education in Secondary school in Bauchi metropolis of Bauchi local government areas of Bauchi state, it was considered appropriate descriptive for this study because it described phenomenon the way they are without bias. Nworgu (1991) described survey design as one in which it allows the researcher to gather information from a large group of people or items studied and analysed data from a few people considered being true representative of the entire group. The stratified random sampling was adapted to five (5) schools from the population of ten (10) Government Senior Secondary Schools in Bauchi local government areas. However four (4) teachers were randomly selected from each school

making total of twenty (20) teachers. This was done to allow for good representations as guided by Krecjie and Morgan (2011).

The main tool of data collection for this study was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was in two parts, the first part was to collect information such as Bio-data of the staff. Second part of the instrument elicited information on the causes of girl child dropout from the school system. Sambo, (2005) maintained that questionnaires gave respondents freedom to express their views or opinion and also makes suggestions. It is anonymous, where the respondents produced honest answers to the questions asked without bias and influence. The instrument was response scale method consist of: 4: Strongly Agreed (SA), 3: Agreed (A), 2: Disagreed (D) and 1: Strongly Disagreed (SD).

The instrument was given to three experts in the field of Test and Measurement for vetting. Comments and remarks from these experts were effected before administering the instrument. The instrument was pretested for reliability, using a test –retest method. The researcher administered fifteen copies of this questionnaire to five different Secondary Schools who were not be part of final sample. After duration of two weeks, another fifteen copies of the same questionnaire was administered to the same schools. The result of the first set of questionnaire was correlated with the second set of questionnaire to yield a correlation coefficient of r , which was adjusted by the Spearman Brown formula to obtain the reliability coefficient, $r = .84$, this means that the instrument was highly consistent.

The researcher together with two other trained research assistants were used to collect the data for this study, using copies of the questionnaire so developed. They personally visited the sampled schools and administered the questionnaire accordingly. These were administered and retrieved instantly to ensure optimum return of the questionnaire. 100% were therefore returned after filling and responses used as data for the study. Data collected was analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. In analysing the research questions of the study the Mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (SD) was employed. First



the points on the scale of response would be assigned numerical values. In interpreting the result of the data analysis, a mean score of 2.50 was considered as a positive meanwhile below 2.50 as negative in term of rating.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent, does economic hardship cause girl child attrition in secondary schools?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Educational Administrators perception on Economic Hardship as constraint against Girl Child Education

SN	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
1.	High inflation of educational materials causes early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	104	2.89	1.004	Positive
2.	The inflation of the school fee cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	104	3.04	1.023	Positive
3.	Accumulation of parent debt causes girl child education in secondary schools.	104	2.43	1.270	Negative
4.	The poor income of the parent causes early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	105	3.09	1.107	Positive
5.	Girl child Assistant of parents cause early marriage girl on child education in secondary schools	105	2.15	1.072	Negative
6.	Participation in domestic activities cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools	104	2.01	1.047	Negative
7.	Undertaking of pretty trading cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	104	2.92	1.204	Positive
Average Mean			2.64	1.103	Positive

In order to answer this research question, the mean and standard deviation on teacher opinion on Economic Hardship causes early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state was calculated and tabulated in which the results shows that the poor income of the parent attracted the highest mean score of 3.09. Meanwhile participation in domestic activities with a mean value of 2.01 shows a positive response that indicated the

economic hardship causes early marriage on girl child education. The average mean score of 2.64, which shows a positive response that indicated the economic hardship, causes a serious early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools in Bauchi state.

Research Question 2: To what extent, does child labour cause girl child attrition in secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Educational Administrators' perception on Child Labour as constraint against Girl Child Education

SN	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
1.	Discrimination of girl child plays role in early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	106	2.65	1.087	Positive
2.	Unemployment cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary in Schools.	106	2.89	1.141	Positive
3.	Overpopulation contributed toward early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	105	2.27	1.187	Negative
4.	Illiteracy cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary Schools	104	2.49	1.199	Negative
5.	Limited free education cause early marriage on girl child education in	104	2.68	1.108	Positive



secondary schools.					
6. The poverty cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	105	3.18	1.133	Positive	
Average Mean		2.69	1.142	Positive	

To answer this research question, the mean and standard deviation on child labour causes early marriage on girl child education in secondary school in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state was calculated and presented in Table 4.5 below. The statement that attracted the highest mean score was the "poverty" with 3.18, which indicated positive rating. Over population carrying the mean of 2.27, in which rating negatively and indicated that it does not causes early marriage on girl child

education in secondary schools in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state. From the table calculated, it can be concluded that the teachers have positive response on the economic hardship causes early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state.

Research Question 3: To what extent, does school distance cause early marriage on girl child in secondary schools?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Educational Administrators' perception on School Distance as constraint against Girl Child Education

SN	Items	N	X	SD	Decision
1	School distance causes early marriage of girl child in secondary schools?	106	1.94	1.050	Negative
2	Tress or tracking of girl child to early marriage cause effect?	105	2.22	1.074	Negative
3	Location of the schools causes early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools?	105	2.43	1.270	Negative
4	Inadequate nearby schools cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools?	106	2.37	1.182	Negative
5	Unsupportive parents cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools?	106	2.99	1.151	Positive
6	Inadequate needed facilities in school cause early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools.	105	2.45	1.135	Negative
Average Mean			2.40	1.14	Negative

To answer this research question, the mean and standard deviation on School Distance Causes early marriage on girl child education in secondary schools was calculated and tabulated in Table 4.3. From the table, the result shows that "Unsupportive parents attracted the highest score of 2.99. School Distance with the mean score of 1.94, which indicated that the results is negative. This shows that teachers agreed the problem of school distance with the mean Average of 1.14, is no longer causes early marriage of girl child in secondary school.

- those in rural areas who may not afford to live out of their houses due to economic hardship.
- Child care should not be placed hard on the girls in the family to help them read at home.
- Paying allowances to girl child from less privilege houses in schools reduces early marriage to cater for the interest of married girl child.
- Many upper basics were upgraded to senior secondary schools married women.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Expanding the number of school places and single sex schools to cater for

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DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The analysis of the data collected for this study shows that there was the positive response on the perceived constraints on girl child education in secondary schools. These results agreed with the findings of Maangwat and Abama (1999), this study found out that Cultural Practices had positive response that cause girl child Attrition in secondary school in Bauchi metropolis, it is implied that Government should organize a mass campaign on and for the girl child education should be planned and conducted in the state toward community sensitization and mobilization.

The study also revealed that Early Marriage in relation to the girl child education was no longer a factor militating against girl child education in the state, based on the responses in research its indicated that the rating Negative, in which contradicted with the work done by Balkisu Yusuf (2008) in which the study focused on Bauchi and Borno in the core North. The review highlighted early marriage, economic hardship, child labour and school distance hindered girl child from the school, but on the process of conducting the research some girls returned to school after marriage to complete the study and nowadays even at the marriage contract agreements used to pronounce for bride to continue with the study.

Remarkable changes are occurring in the median age, at first marriage and in women's educational attainment in northern Nigeria. The girl child attrition has raised notable change and there is an increasing tendency for young women to attain higher level of education.

The findings however, disagreed with the findings of Garba (2003), Educational challenges are particularly acute in rural areas; globally 25% percent of children in rural areas are out of school compared with 16% percent of children in urban areas, this is because educational institutions are often scarce in rural areas. Even when accessible, children may have to walk long distance to attend, which could have a greater deterring effect on girl due to safety reasons. Based on the results of this research, it's clearly indicated that the teachers responses on the School Distance as a cause of girl child early marriage in Secondary School was

Negative, which means nowadays School Distance cannot serve as the factor militating girl child Education in Bauchi metropolis. In this regard Day Secondary Schools were upgraded to Senior Secondary School in Bauchi metropolis.

Based on the findings of this research, the economic hardship has the positive response which indicated that it can cause girl child early marriage in secondary schools, this was agreed with the finding of Garba (2003) Although payment allow parents to finance education for their children when quality publicly financed schooling is not available, voluntary school attendance may lead to some parents not to send to school. In general, the higher the fee, the likely it is that families will decide not to educate their children or be force to make choices about which of their children to educate.

The results also reaffirm and tallying with the work done by Abama (1999) in which itemized child labour as the factor cause girl child attrition in Secondary Schools, in the findings of this study the teachers response indicated positively that child labour cause girl child attrition in secondary schools in Bauchi local government areas of Bauchi state.

CONCLUSION

It was discovered on the findings that distance of school was not served as the factor caused early marriage of girl child in secondary schools. It was observed that based on the result findings of this study; there is no significant positive relationship between school distances, child labour and economic hardship against girl child education in secondary schools. However, it was evidently discovered from this study that, lowering direct cost of education for girls by ensuring free education in reality, expanding the number of school places and single sex schools to cater for those in nearby rural areas who may not afford to live out of their homes due to economic hardship, community participation in schools management, child care should not be placed hard on the girls in the family to help them read at home, paying allowances to girls from less privilege homes in schools among others are panacea that enhances enrolment and completion of girl child education in secondary schools.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

1. An urgent plan of a convenient and needful curriculum should be made by adult and Non-Formal Education sector to embrace the challenge of dropout of school among girls.
2. A mass campaign on and for the girl- child education should be planned and conducted in the north towards community sensitization and mobilization.
3. The programme for girl child education should be well spread around rural areas where most of the school dropout girls are located.
4. There should be a collaborative approach with community and religious leaders of the area; if possible they should take the lead in the campaign of girl child education.
5. Equip girl child with the skills to understand and analyse prevailing gender issues that negatively affect girls' development.

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