



THE CAUSES OF LOW ENROLMENT OF GIRL-CHILD INTO SCHOOLS IN RUWAN DORUWA DISTRICT OF MARU LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF ZAMFARA STATE

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Abstract

The importance of girl-child education in our society cannot be over emphasized. It is in this light that this research, investigated the causes of low enrolment of girl-child into schools in Ruwan Doruwa district of Maru Local Government of Zamfara state. Three research objectives were put forward. The research adopted the descriptive survey research method. The research population is made up of all the primary and secondary school's pupils in Dingyadi district, the purposively sampling technique was used to sample data from the population. A total number of 200 respondents were sampled from Ruwan Doruwa town. The reliability of the instrument was done with the method of test-re-test. The research revealed that the level of enrolment of the girl child is on the increase and it cut across all socio economical background. Furthermore, this research also revealed that the problems facing girl-child education in Ruwan Doruwa district is not far from poverty, early marriage, cultural misconceptions and fear of the girl-child becoming promiscuous. The research recommends among other things that, government should build at least one girl only school in the district, traditional and religious leaders should join hands in the enlightenment of the community on the need to educate a girl-child and benefits embedded in it.
Key words: Education, enrollment, girl-child, Students, early-marriage.

Introduction

Background of the Study: Education is the process of imparting and acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitude through teaching and learning. This process can be informal such as learning at home and from peer groups. It can also be formal such as schools and religious body. It can also be seen traditionally, as the initiation of the young and old into the value system of the society. Education is also the deliberate, systematic, and sustained human effort to learn the values, attitudes, skills behaviors that are consistent with the values system of a given society (Thomson, 2000). Education is a human right that should be given to all human beings. There are lots of international human right instruments that provide for education as a fundamental human right which include the universal declaration of human right (1948), international convention on economic, social and cultural right (1960). Also, according to the Nigeria philosophy of education which stated" that education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian citizens (NPE 6th Edition). Education is a vital instrument for development and social change. Education been a human right should be made available to all be it the boy-child or the girl-child. The term 'girl-child' refers to a female between the ages of 6-18 years (Mukhtar et al., 2011). The National Child Welfare Policy (1989) as cited by Ada (2001) defines the girl-child as a female below 14 years of age. Offorma (2009) defines it as a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen (18) years of age. This period is made up of infancy, childhood, early and late adolescence stages of



development. The girl-child is seen as a young female person who would eventually grow into a woman and marry: The gender apartheid places the girl-child in a disadvantaged position, where her potentials are suppressed and self-actualization is not achieved. She therefore, becomes a victim of a pre-existing socio-cultural male chauvinism. Furthermore, on the account of gender, girl-children are subjected to all multiple forms of oppression, exploitation and discrimination. Girl-child education has then become a major issue of concern in most developing countries of the world today, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where a large number of young girls do not attend school. According to UNICEF (2007), the global figure for out-of-school children is estimated to be 121 million, out of which 65 million (approximately 53.8%) were girls and over 80 percent of these girls live in sub-Saharan Africa. Primary school completion rates in Africa have been the lowest in the world and this remains a concern as half of the world's out-of-school children (OOSC) are concentrated in 15 countries, eight of which are in sub-Saharan Africa (Ibrahim, 2012). In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of girls out of school each year has risen from 20 million in 1990 to 24 million in 2002 (Offorma, 2009). Also, according to Goodluck (2011), Nigeria has 9 million (37%) out-of-school children, which is more than one-third of its primary school age children and this is the highest in Africa. Nigeria a country with increasing number of out-of-school children annually, this trend varies from zone to zone.

Zamfara State, like every other state in Northern Nigeria, couples with low girl-child enrolment in school and colleges. This has become a major source of concern and worries to the State Government, Non- governmental organizations and other stakeholders in the educational sector. This trend has, over the years, continued to deepen the educational and economic inequality between the men and women in the state. Furthermore, the rural areas in Sokoto State are the worst hit; they do not-only lack schools but also see no need for enrolment of the girl-child. This ignorance has continued to plague most rural dwellers in the north from year to year. It is really a pathetic situation where people, from generation to generation, fail to realize that they could be of any use not only to themselves but to the larger society.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigeria philosophy of education stated in one of its belief that education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges. Education is meant for all; in fact, it is the fundamental human right of every child whether boy or girl, able or disabled to acquire the basic education. There should therefore, be no discrimination as to who goes to school and who does not, hence education recognizes and helps to unlock the potentials in every child. Meanwhile, low enrolment of the girl-child in school is widening the educational and economic gap between the men and the women folks in Northern Nigeria and Sokoto state in particular. Addressing the problems and challenges of girl- child education in Ruwan Doruwa district has become necessary in view of not only the ignorance of rural dwellers on the importance of education, but also the practice of keeping the girl-child out of school.

Objective of the Study

This study intends to achieve the following objectives: -

1. To determine the level of enrolment of the girl-child students into Primary and secondary Schools in Ruwan Doruwa district in Maru Local Government Area, Zamfara state.
2. To identify the major problems responsible for low girl-child enrolment in schools in



Ruwan Doruwa district in Maru Local Government Area, Sokoto state.

3. To find solutions to the problems of low enrolment of the girl-child in Ruwan Doruwa district in Maru Local Government Area, Zamfara state.

Research Questions

This study hoped to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the level of girl-child enrolment into primary and secondary schools in Ruwan Doruwa district in Maru Local Government Area, Zamfara state?
2. What are the problems associated with the enrolment of girl-child students into schools in Ruwan Doruwa district in Maru Local Government Area, Zamfara state?
3. What are the possible ways of solving the problems of low enrolment of the girl-child into schools in Ruwan Doruwa district in Maru Local Government Area, Zamfara state?

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The research is limited to Ruwan Doruwa district with specific attention to the selected Schools. The study intends to find out Girl-child students enrolment in Schools, and also identify factors affecting Girl-child student enrolment retention and completion in Ruwan Doruwa district in Maru Local Government Area, Zamfara state.

Methodology

The population for this study comprised all the primary and secondary schools students within Ruwan Doruwa district. The schools are Government Day Secondary Schools Ruwan Doruwa with 883 students, Model Primary School, Ruwan Doruwa with 902 students and Usmaniyya Model Primary School Ruwan Doruwa with 548 students. For the purpose of this study the researchers used the purposively sampling techniques to study the causes of low enrolment of the girl child into schools located inside Ruwan Doruwa town. The schools are Government Day Secondary Ruwan Doruwa with 883 students and Model Primary School Ruwan Doruwa with 902 students. The purposively sampling techniques is a non-probability sampling technique. In this technique a particular group in a community is chosen for intensives studies because of certain outstanding peculiarities that seem to suit or favour the research expectations. This type of techniques is most appropriate for communities or group studies. The instrument for gathering data from sampled respondents in order to ascertain causes of low enrolment of the girl-child in the selected primary school, junior secondary schools and senior secondary school is the questionnaire. The questionnaire for this study is divided into two sections. The First Section deals with general information or bio-data of the respondent such as their sex, age, religion, educational qualification of parent, occupation of parents etc. while the Second Section consist of five questions each of 3-modified likert scale options of strongly agree (A), undecided (UD), and disagree (D). Validity of the research instrument was ascertained by expert judgment of the research specialist from the Department of Educational Psychology, Zamfara State College of Education, Maru. The view of the expert researchers was used to review the questionnaire. The researchers made use of the test-re-test method to check the reliability of the instrument. The researchers administered five questionnaires to selected respondents that belong to the research population. Their responses were collected and after a week the same questionnaires were 'administered to the same respondents. The response from the first and the second questionnaire were compared and we found out that there is no significant difference between the two. This



showed that the questionnaire is reliable.

The questionnaires were distributed by the researchers themselves. The respondents were given time to respond to the instrument. From these questionnaires, the researchers were able to collect the data needed for this research. The data collected was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics and tables to interpret the data gathered from respondents.

Answers to research questions

Research Question one: *To what extent does girl-child enroll into primary and secondary schools in Ruwan Doruwa district?*

Table 1: level of enrolment of the girl child.

S/N	Items on level of enrolment	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	The enrolment of girls into school is on the increase	108	56	13	6	80	40
2	The enrolment of girls into school is on the decrease	81	40	13	8	105	52
3	Only the girls from wealthy parents are enrolled into school	48	24	35	18	116	58
4	Enrolment of girls into school cut across all parental socio-economic background	143	72	48	24	8	4
5	The ratio of girls to boys enrolment into school is almost equal	4	2	07	04	188	94

Table 1 above show that 56% of the respondents agree that the enrolment girls in on the increase as against 40 % of the respondent that is on the decrease it show that there is a slight difference in the increment of the enrolment of the girl child. Item 3 shown that 58% of the respondent disagree that only girls from wealthy parents are enrolled as against 24% that agree. Item 4 shown that 72% of the respondent agree that enrolment of girls child cut across all parental socio-economic background. Item 3 shown that 94% of the respondent disagree that the ratio of girls to boys enrolment in almost equal.

Research Question two: *what are the causes of low enrolment of the girl child into schools in Ruwan Doruwa district*

Table 2 Responses on the causes of low enrolment of the girl -child

S/N	Items on level of enrolment	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Girls are withdrawn from school regularly for early marriage.	192	96	0	0	8	4
2	Distance to school discourages girls from going to remaining in school to complete their education	36	18	4	2	159	80
3	Lack of employment after completion of school discourages girl child enrolment	63	32	16	8	119	60
4	Poverty of parents is a detriment to girl child education	108	54	23	12	68	34
5	Some cultural belief of considering male child better than girl child is a problem against girl	133	67	16	8	59	30



	children enrolment						
6	Fear of the girl-child becoming promiscuous discourage parent to enroll their girl child.	112	56	19	10	67	34

Table 2 above show that 96% of the respondents agree girls are withdrawn from school for early marriage. Item 2 reveal that 80% of the respondents disagree that distance to school is detriment to girl child education. Item 2 reveal that 60% of the respondents disagree that lack of employment discourages girl child enrolment as against 32% who are agree. Item 4 show that 54% of the respondents agree that poverty of the parents is a detriment to girl child education as against 34% who disagree. In item 5, 67% of the respondent agree that some cultural belief of considering male child better than girl child is a problem against girl child enrolment as against 30% who disagree. Furthermore item 6 reveal that 56% of the respondents agree fear of the girl-child becoming promiscuous discourage parent to enroll their girl child as against 34% of the respondent who disagree.

Research Question Three: What are the possible ways of solving the problems of low enrolment of the girl-child?

Table 3: responses on the possible ways to solve the problems of low enrolment of the girl-child. ITEMS

S/N	Items on level of enrolment	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Girls should be separated from boys to improve girls enrolment	139	70	4	2	56	28
2	Government should provide girls only school to encourage the enrolment of the girl child.	167	84	3	2	28	14
3	Traditional rulers and religious leaders should sensitize parents on importance of girl child enrolment	198	99	2	1	0	0
4	There should be proper legislation that encourages girl child enrolment	192	96	4	2	3	2
5	Girls should be given free scholarship to encourage their enrolment in school.	183	92	3	2	14	7

Table 3 reveal that 70% of the respondents agree that girls should be separated from boys to improve girls enrolment while 84% of the respondents government should provide girls only school to encourage the enrolment of the girl child. Item 3 shows that 99% of the respondents agree that traditional rulers and religious leaders should sensitize parents on importance of girl child enrolment, while 99% of the respondents agree that there should be proper legislation that encourages girl child enrolment and 92% of the respondents agree that girls should be given free scholarship to encourage their enrolment in school.

Discussion of Findings

From the findings in this study it has been discovered that the enrolment of girl-child into schools



in Ruwan Doruwa district is on the increase and not on the decrease. It has also been discovered that not only the girls from wealthy parents are enrolled into school and that enrolment of girls into school cut across all parental socio- economic background. It has been discovered as well that the ratio of girls to boys enrolment into school is not almost equal despite the increase in the enrolment of girls in schools this is in agreement with Jekayinoluwa (2003), who stated that available records of gross primary enrolment rate in Nigeria between 1990 and 1993 indicate that despite the steady increase in female enrolment rate, the gender gap was 17.3 percent in 1990, which fell to 14.9 percent in 1991 and rose to 18.4 percent in 1993.

Furthermore, the findings above have revealed that causes of low enrolment of girl child into schools include; the fact that they are withdrawn from school regularly for early marriage, this is in agreement with Abayomi (1995) who pointed out that 46.2 percent of girls between 15 and 19 have already begun child bearing, poverty of parents, some cultural belief of considering male child better than girl child which is in agreement with Ekezie (1997), who is of the view that traditional society gives little or no recognition to the efforts or contributions of women to national development, they believe that a girl-child is inferior to the male-child. Also, the fear of the girl-child becoming promiscuous is another factor behind the low enrolment of the girl child in Ruwan Doruwa district. It has also been revealed that distance to school and lack of employment after completion of school are not part of the reasons behind low enrolment of girl child into school in this district.

The Findings have also shown that all the solutions proffered by the researchers are agreed to by the respondents. The solutions include; girls should be separated from boys to improve girls enrolment, government should provide girls only school to encourage the enrolment of the girl child, the importance of education in securing good job for girl would encourage enrolment in school, traditional rulers and religious leaders should sensitize parents on importance of girl child enrolment, there should be proper legislation that encourages girl child enrolment, and finally that girls should be given free scholarship to, encourage their enrolment in school

Conclusion

The following conclusion was deduced from the research that was performed in Ruwan Doruwa district.

1. That the enrolment of the girl child is on the increase in the district.
2. The ratio of boys to girls in school is not equal
3. Enrolment of the girl child cut across all socio economical background
4. Early marriage, fear of the girl child becoming promiscuous and the belief that the boy child is better than the girl child are the causes of low enrolment of the girl child in the district.
5. Establishment of girls only school, providing scholarships to the girl child, proper legislation that will encourage girl child enrolment and effort from the traditional rulers and religious leaders will help to solve the problem of the low enrolment of the girl child in Ruwan Doruwa district

Recommendations

1. Government should try as much as possible to build at least one girl only school in Ruwan Doruwa district.
2. Girls who performed well in examination should be publicly acknowledged and rewarded.



3. Religious leaders and traditional leaders should preach the encouragement of equal education for both male and female children.
4. Government should finance the education of girl child from primary school up to tertiary institutions.
5. Government should put in place strict laws that punish parents who withdraw their girl child from schools for marriage or for any reason whatsoever.

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