

INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KEBBI CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF KEBBI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of Socio-cultural factors on the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State, Nigeria. Five research questions and five hypotheses guided the study. The related literature review was done under the conceptual framework, empirical studies and summary which identified the influence of socio-cultural factors on the girl-child education in secondary schools. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 810 principals, vice principals and PTA Exco members from 90 secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State. A sample of 300 principals, vice principals and PTA Exco members were used for the study. A 25 item structured questionnaire constructed by the researcher titled "Influence of Socio-cultural Factors on the Girl-child Education Questionnaire (SCOGEQ)" was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the t- test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that early marriage, gender preference, socio-cultural factors, socio-economic statues of parents and political factors significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State. It was recommended among others that the issue of early marriage should be avoided by parents who should encourage and give orientation to their girl-child on the importance of education before marriage.

Key word: Socio-cultural factor, Girl-child education

Introduction

Education is a human rights that should be given to all human beings male and female. Education developed from the human struggle for survival and enlightenment. Education may be formal or informal. Informal education refers to the general social process by which human beings acquire the knowledge and skills needed to function in their culture. Formal education refers to the process

by which teachers instruct students in courses of study within an institution. Girl-child education is a process through which the young girl acquires knowledge, skills and realizes her potentialities and uses them for self-actualization, economic benefits and to be useful to her society and others. According to Ocho (2005), Girl-child education is the process of providing information to an inexperienced person to help her develop physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, politically, and economically. Education is the process through which individuals are made functional members of their society (Ocho, 2005).

Gomwalk (1996) defines girl-child education as the knowledge and skills given to the girl-child in the formal school setting to enable her to advance her status – knowledge for interaction, self-improvement and status advancement. He went further to say that girl-child education is very important in our society now because, previously the girl-child position was known only to be in the kitchen. And this lack of knowledge was adversely affected, the development of the society. According to Okeke (2011), girl –child education is a global policy and the process of empowering future women so that they will be able not only to defend their rights and live with dignity, but also, to contribute to national development. Girl-child education is the key to the development of human resources, thus through education, women can realize their potentials for long-term sustainable development.

Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu (1992) opine that as a social institution, the school management is affected by various forces within the society and this affect the education of the girl-child. They went further to identify some of the forces that affect management of the schools to be socio-cultural, politico-economic, religious or technological. They observed that these forces act collectively to determine the quality and quantity of the output from the schools. For any secondary school to achieve its stated goals, availability of human, material, financial and time resources is necessary. Management of secondary schools has the duty to ensure that competent staff are recruited, accommodation are provided for the students and that necessary facilities and equipment are purchased.

Educational managers can manage effectively and efficiently if the external factors which have effect on the management process are properly controlled. Such are those factors that influence the secondary education of the girl child. Management of secondary education just like any other educational institution, according to Okwori and Ede (2012), may be defined as the whole process

through which appropriate human and material resources are made available and made effective for accomplishing the processes of an educational enterprise.

The relationship between education and development is established very well such that education is a lay index of development. Research has also shown that schooling improves productivity, health, status and reduces negative features of life such as child trafficking, child labour, child abuse and so on. World Bank (2002), in support of this states that Girl-child education raises economic productivity, reduces poverty, and fertility rates, lowers infant and maternal mortality, and improves health, nutrition and environmental management. Because of this, there has been a lot of emphasizes on the need for all citizens to have access to basic education. However, the researcher has observed that girl-child education is important for proper management of secondary schools, national development and realization of human dignity. These factors that affect girl child education have effect on the overall school management process of planning, organizing, staffing, coordinating, and directing. The girl-child education is an economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights since people cannot fully realize their freedom without education. Like all human rights, the context of female right to education can be found in our local legislators and international commitments. Despite all this, the female child still bears the double jeopardy she suffers as a child and then the discrimination that comes as a result of her being a girl-child.

UNESCO (2009), report states that 69 million children are not enrolled in school and majority of them are girls. Despite the fact that education is the right of every girl-child, most girls do not have access to education. The girl-child is most often saddled with responsibilities, which may make her not to have access to quality education even in this 21st century.

Statistical monitoring of education reveals that the national literacy rate for girls is only 56% as compared to 72% for boys (Jekayinfa, 2006). While in other states, the female literacy, enrolment and achievement rates are much more unreasonably lower than their male counterparts. This is because of many factors such as socio-cultural factors, economic, political, and early marriage. In support of this view, Magaji (2010) observes that even though education is regarded as a human right for the realization of human dignity, many factors have been found to be responsible for the low enrolment of girls in schools when compared to the enrolment of boys. Among these factors, according to her, are poverty, socio-cultural impediments, religious misinterpretation of Holy Book, societal negative attitude to women education, early marriage and gender biases.

Kiki (2010) discovered that there was gap in favour of boys in school environment, retention and completion. The study on girl education revealed factors affecting girl education as cost of education, school environment, government policies and their implementation, the culture of the people amongst others. There are no policies that specifically address gender issues thereby leaving room for the gender gap.

The right to education, which is a basic human right, is frequently denied to girls in Nigeria particularly. In the area, when families have to make choices due to limited resources of either a girl or a boy child, it is always the boy that is preferred to attend school. As such, many girls are prevented from getting education because families often send their daughters out to work at a young age so that they can get the additional income they may need to exist beyond subsistence level and finance the education of boys who are heirs to the families.

Though the importance of education in a life of any individual cannot be over emphasized, the most basic factors perceived to be militating against girl-child education are early marriage, gender preference, socio-cultural, parent's socio-economic status and political factors. Early marriage is referred to both formal marriages and informal unions in which a girl lives with a partner as if married before age of 18 (UNICEF, 2005). From their definition, one will conclude that early marriage is any marriage carried out below the age of 18years, before the girl is physically, physiological, and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibility of marriage and childbearing. Field-man (2000) states that evidence from developing countries showered that early marriage leads to early pregnancy and early child bearing contributes to the limitation of career opportunities for teenage mothers.

The above argument was based on the lower qualification achieved by girls who have dropped out of school due to marriage or pregnancy. Evidence in this report revealed that young mothers are at a greater risk of living school or attaining a lower level of education and therefore the possibility for them to reach their professional goals is minimal which leads to fewer job opportunities. Early marriage leads to girl child dropout from school temporarily or permanently, before she completes her secondary education. Chivore (1986) notes that dropout has a negative impact on the schools, communities and the country at large. The negative impact may take different forms, for example, a wastage in education resources.

Another factor that militates against girl-child education is gender preference. Gender is a social construct which is fundamentally the ways boys and girls

interact with each other, to the ways development issues and initiatives are planned for and implemented. Chege and Sifuna (2006), observe that in many developing countries, a long history that dates right from the colonial period and possibly even earlier, present trends of gender inequality, not only in education but also in labour market, political leadership and social and economic spheres. Gender preference is located within a broader historical and cultural context that explains discrepancies in the education of girls relative to boys. This is so because education is developed from traditional and cultural settings, contexts through the era of missionaries, the colonial times, to the post-colonial period whereby the construction of gender, gender identities and relations, based on patriarchal ideologies, have resulted in fewer women and girls benefiting from education (Chege and Sifuna 2006: 13).

Juma and Simatwa (2014) observe that cultural factors have a big influence on girl student academic achievement than boys' students. Thus the girl child is subjected to domestic chores daily in case of day schools. As for boarding schools, the girl student is affected mostly during school holidays. Furthermore, they state, the boy child is given preference where financial resources are scarce. Hence, the girl student does not attend school regularly as desired. The girl child is also affected more by incidents of HIV and AIDS pandemic as the girl student is compelled to take care of the sick siblings and parents as the case may be in serious cases of loss of income, they are forced to drop out of school temporarily to look for food, clothing and at times shelter. When they are readmitted back to schools their performance in class work is generally below average.

The education of the girl-child has been influenced by so many factors; amongst them is the political factor. Christopher (2011) supports this assertion by saying that the inability of the government to provide adequate infrastructural facilities in schools to accommodate the training number of children in our schools, have made certain families to enroll only the male children in place of the female one. Eshiwani (1993) notes that the presence of quality school facilities and services are some of the symbols of high educational quality. It is the role of the principal to put in place rules and regulations that will ensure that girls remain in school at all times unless they are participating in educational activities outside the school.

In Kebbi Central Senatorial District, education of the girl-child has not received serious attention. This is as a result of the materialistic concept of education among the parents especially the uneducated parents and the other factors mentioned earlier. The belief is that the girl-child will eventually marry and leave the family with whatever material benefits derivable from her education to her

husband's home. The parents would rather prefer to invest in the education of the male child who will eventually marry and bear the father's name.

According to tradition, the role of women has been that of complete house-wife, home maintenance and rearing of children. This is why right from childhood; the girl child is prepared and trained by her mother and others in cooking, and all kinds of chores in the home. All these are directed towards becoming a better house-wife. Thus, the gender role type poses a bias against the girls by the society. In Kebbi Central Senatorial District, the girl-child is faced with a lot of constraints and factors which act as serious impediments towards her self-realization. It is in line with the above that the researcher intends to find out the factors influencing the secondary education of the girl child in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State.

Statement of the Problem

Education is the process of transmitting values, cultures, etc from one generation to another. It is seen as a fundamental human right that should be given to all human beings whether male or female. The problem of the girl-child education is global and as old as human creation. Thus, women education has always been in a strong state of marginalization. The issues in recent times have received worldwide attention. Over the years, the role of the girl-child in Kebbi Central Senatorial District has been erroneously conceptualized to housekeeping and child bearing. This is why males are groomed for careers in technical and scientific fields while females are guided to concentrate their efforts on home economics. The girl-child constitutes the highest percentage of Kebbi Central's population but very few of the total female population are literate as against the male population. This is because in Kebbi Central Senatorial District, female secondary education is influenced by socio-cultural factors. The girl-child is denied education, suffers from child trafficking, prostitution and ritual sacrifices.

Thus, in the study area, the relevant stakeholders have raised serious concerns on the factors influencing girl-child education such as early marriage, gender preference, socio-economic status of parents', political and cultural factors. This leads to girl- child dropout from school.

It is against this background that there is a felt need by the researcher to research into the influence of socio-cultural factors on the education of the girl-child in Kebbi Central Senatorial District.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of socio-cultural factors on the education of the girl-child in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. examine the influence of early marriage on girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State.
2. find out the influence of gender preference on the education of the girl-child.
3. find out the influence of traditional/socio-cultural factors on the education of the girl-child.
4. establish the influence of socio-economic status of parents on the education of the girl-child.
5. Ascertain the influence of political factors on the girl-child education.

Research Questions

Based on the purpose of the study, the following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the influence of early marriage on the education of the girl-child in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District?
2. To what extent does gender preference influence the education of the girl-child?
3. What are the traditional/ cultural factors that influence the education of the girl-child?
4. How does the socio-economic status of parents influence the education of the girl-child ?
5. To what extent does the political factor influence the education of the girl-child?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Early marriage does not significantly influence the education of the girl-child in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District.
2. Gender preference does not significantly influence the education of the girl-child.
3. Traditional/Socio-cultural factors do not significantly influence the girl-child education.

4. Socio-economic statuses of parents do not significantly influence the education of the girl-child.
5. Political factors do not significantly influence the education of the girl-child.

Methodology

The research design for the study is casual comparative (Ex-post-facto) design. Ex-post-facto research design according to Emaikwu (2011) is a research design in which the independent variables have already occurred and in which the researcher begins observation on the dependent variables, followed by a retrospective study of possible relationships and effects. Ex-post-facto research design is employed for this study because the study area is large, and a selection of a small portion will enable the researcher to come out with concrete evidence that would produce the desired characteristics typical of the sampled population under the study (Akem, 2007). Survey research design requires willful and active involvement of the study participants in the collection of data where the researcher elicits the needed information from willing respondents through the use of questionnaire.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised 90 principals, 180 vice principals, 540 PTA Exco members from 90 public secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State. Thus making a total of 810 principals, vice principals, and PTA Exco members.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of 300 out of 810 principals, vice principals, and PTA Exco members representing 37% was selected from nine out of 90 public secondary schools representing 10% for the study. This agrees with Glass and Hopkins in Emaikwu (2012), who assert that where the population is over 1000, a sample of 5% and above is considered as an ideal representative sample.

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Simple random sampling of balloting without replacement was also employed to select the sample size. This was to guarantee the chances of including every member of the population in the study. Thus, some pieces of papers with written numbers were squeezed and dropped in a container for some persons to pick without replacement until the required number of sample is obtained.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument that was used for the collection of data is a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher called “Influence of Socio-cultural Factors on Girl-child Education Questionnaire” [SCOGEQ]. It is a twenty five (25) item structured questionnaire which consists of two sections- A and B. Section A contains the name of the schools of the respondents while section B elicited information on the variables of the study such as socio-cultural factors, gender preference, early marriage, socio-economic status of parents’ and political factor. The instrument is modeled on a four point rating scale with the following weights as assigned below: Strongly Agree (SA) (4), Agree (A) (3), Disagree (D) (2), and Strongly Disagree (SD) (1) respectively.

Method of Data Collection

A total of 300 copies of the questionnaire were given to respondents in the 9 selected public secondary schools. These copies of the questionnaires were administered and collected back from the respondents with the assistance of some trained research assistants. These trained research assistants were briefed on the purpose of the exercise and trained on how to assist the respondents in filling the questionnaire. The researcher collected all the completed copies of the questionnaire from the respondents on the spot to avoid loss of instrument and by implication, loss of vital information.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data collected was presented as follows:

Research Question One

What are the influence of early marriage on the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District?

The data that provide answer to the research question one were presented on table 1.

Table 1: Perceived views of Principals, Vice Principals and PTA Exco members on the Influence of Early Marriage on the Girl-child Education in Secondary Schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District.

Item	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	STD	Decision
No								
1	Female children who get married at early age easily drop out of school.	215	56	18	11	3.58	0.77	Accepted
2	School programmes are affected by high number of female dropouts as a result of early marriage.	187	68	25	20	3.41	0.90	Accepted
3	Early marriage among female students negatively influences school revenue generation.	144	121	19	16	3.31	0.81	Accepted
4	High dropout rate of female students as a result of early marriage influences her self-actualization.	136	133	21	10	3.32	0.75	Accepted
5	Increased female dropouts as a result of early marriage affect school planning.	136	119	28	17	3.25	0.85	Accepted
	Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation					3.37	0.81	Accepted

Data on Table 1 showed that the means rating for items 1 to 5 in this cluster were 3.58, 3.41, 3.31, 3.32 and 3.25 respectively with their corresponding standard deviations of 0.77, 0.90, 0.81, 0.75 and 0.85. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents had agreed that female children who get married at early age easily drop out of school. School programmes are affected by high number of female dropouts as a result of early marriage. They also agreed that early marriage among female students negatively influence girl child education in secondary schools. More so, high dropout rate of female students as a result of early marriage affects school management and that increased female dropouts as a result of early marriage

influence school planning. The cluster mean of 3.37 with the standard deviation of 0.81 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that early marriage influence girl child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District.

Research Question Two

To what extent does gender preference influence girl-child education in secondary schools?

The data that provide answer to the research question are presented on table 2.

Table 2: Perceived views of Principals, Vice Principals and PTA Exco Members on the Influence of Gender Preference on the Girl-child Education in Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	STD	Decision
6	Gender disparity and inequality result to low school enrolment among girls, these lead to failure in the school system.	161	103	21	15	3.37	0.82	Accepted
7	Female students are treated with high sense of considerations among their male counterparts by the schools.	151	123	16	10	3.38	0.74	Accepted
8	The school environment is sometimes hostile to girls thereby affecting their level of cooperation with the school management.	191	79	18	12	3.50	0.78	Accepted
9	Crises sometimes erupt in the school when female students are exempted from school labour by management.	117	94	56	33	2.98	1.01	Accepted
10	Female students are sometimes placed on scholarship to	146	108	27	19	3.27	0.87	Accepted

encourage parents sending more of their girls to school which tends to boost school enrolment.

Cluster Mean/standard deviation	3.30	0.84	Accepted
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From the analysis of data as shown on Table 2, the mean ratings for items 6 to 10 in this cluster were 3.37, 3.38, 3.50, 2.98 and 3.27 respectively with their corresponding standard deviation of 0.82, 0.74, 0.78, 1.01 and 0.87. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents had agreed that Gender disparity and inequality result to low school enrolment among girls, these lead to failure in the school system. Female students are treated with high sense of considerations among their male counterparts by the schools. Also that, the school environment is sometimes hostile to girls thereby affecting their level of cooperation with the school management. More so, crises sometimes erupt in the school when female students are exempted from school labour by management and that female students are sometimes placed on scholarship to encourage parents sending more of their girls to school which tends to boost school enrolment. The cluster mean of 3.30 with the standard deviations of 0.84 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that gender preference influence girl child education in secondary schools.

Research Question Three:

What are the socio-cultural factors that influence the girl-child education in secondary schools?

The data that provide answer to the research question three are presented on Table 3.

Table 3: Perceived views of Principals, Vice Principals and PTA Exco Members on the Influence of Socio-cultural Factors on the Girl-child Education in Secondary Schools.

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	ST D	Decision
11	Many African cultures such as early marriage, gender preference and girls as home-keepers, do not see girl-child education as a necessity.	102	91	61	46	2.83	1.06	Accepted
12	Schools suffer low enrolment rate as a result of the cultural beliefs of some parents who see girl-child education as a waste of money.	140	106	31	23	3.21	0.91	Accepted
13	Male children receive better educational attention from their parents than the girls as a result of perceive cultural beliefs.	144	112	26	18	3.27	0.86	Accepted
14	Most girls stop schooling after their secondary education and get married because of cultural beliefs of their parents.	149	111	29	11	3.31	0.80	Accepted
15	The belief of cultural attire to be worn by girls in most cultures discourages them sending their female children to school to wear short skirt and blouse.	102	143	34	21	3.09	0.85	Accepted
	Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation					3.03	0.90	Accepted

Table 3 indicates that the mean ratings for items 11 to 15 in this cluster were 2.83, 3.21, 3.27, 3.31 and 3.09 with their corresponding standard deviations of 1.06, 0.91, 0.86, 0.80 and 0.85. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents had agreed that many African cultures such as early marriage, gender preference and girls as home-keepers, do not see girl-child education as a necessity. Schools suffer low enrolment rate as a result of the cultural beliefs of some parents who see girl-child education as a waste of money. Male children receive better educational attention from their parents than the girls as a result of perceive cultural beliefs. Moreso, most girls stop schooling after their secondary education and get married because of cultural beliefs of their parents and that the belief of cultural attire to be worn by girls in most cultures discourages them sending their female children to school to wear short skirt and blouse. The cluster mean of 3.03 with the standard deviations of 0.90 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies socio-cultural factors influence the girl-child education in secondary schools.

Research Question Four:

How does the socio-economic status of parents influence the girl-child education in secondary schools?

The data that provide answer to the research question four were presented on table 4.

Table 4: Perceived views of Principals, Vice Principals and PTA Exco members on the Influence of Socio-economic Status of Parents on the Girl-child Education in Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	STD	Decision
16	Female children of wealthy parents have the opportunity of attending schools which tend to increase the revenue of the schools.	172	88	26	14	3.39	0.85	Accepted
17	Girls from poor home background find it difficult to purchase the needed learning materials and this affects effective school planning	101	160	22	17	2.82	0.97	Accepted

	and learning process.								
18	Female children from parents' low socio-economic status feel shy to introduce their parents which tends to affect them psychologically as well as their participation in schools programmes	125	141	19	15	3.25	0.79	Accepted	
19	Parents always prefer paying their male children's school fees to females thereby making room for school drop outs among girls.	151	114	24	11	3.35	0.78	Accepted	
20	Wealthy parents do not mind sending all their male and female children to school which tends to positively boost the school population and enhance more revenue.	136	133	17	14	3.30	0.78	Accepted	
	Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation					3.22	0.83	Accepted	

From the analysis of data shown on Table 4, the mean ratings for item 16 to 20 in this cluster were 3.39, 2.82, 3.25, 3.35, and 3.30 respectively with corresponding standard deviations of 0.85, 0.97, 0.79, 0.78 and 0.78. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents agreed that female children of wealthy parents have the opportunity of attending schools which tends to increase the revenue of the schools. Girls from poor home background find it difficult to purchase the needed learning materials and this influences effective school planning and learning process. Also that female children from parents' low socio-economic status feel shy to introduce their parents which tends to affect them psychologically as well as their participation in schools programmes. Moreover, parents always prefer paying their male children's school fees than females thereby making room for school drop outs among girls and that wealthy parents do not mind sending all their male and female children to school which tends to positively boost the school population and enhance more revenue. The cluster mean of 3.22 with the standard

deviations of 0.83 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that socio-economic status of parents influence the education of the girl-child in secondary schools.

Research Question Five:

To what extent does the political factor influence the girl-child education in secondary schools?

The data that provide answer to the research question four are presented on table 5.

Table 5: Perceived views of Principals, Vice Principals and PTA Exco members on the Influence of Political factor on the girl-child Education in Secondary Schools

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	STD	Decision
21	Lack of government enactment policy emphasis on girl-child education influence female low school enrolment.	156	94	31	19	3.29	0.89	Accepted
22	Non-implementation of polices on girl-child education by the government discourages female enrolment in schools.	144	118	22	16	3.30	0.82	Accepted
23	Nigeria government policy prohibiting girl-child education on the basis of married women and / or girls, who are pregnant or rearing children, tends to affect schools in terms of increase in funding.	168	100	19	13	3.41	0.79	Accepted
24	Political factors resulting to irregular or non-payment of salaries discourages parents from sending their children to schools and this tends to affect co-educational system.	143	93	42	22	3.19	0.94	Accepted

25	Politicians sometimes hijack certain benefits meant for girl-child education and this tends to affect policy implementation by the school management.	140	109	31	20	3.23	0.89	Accepted
	Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation					3.28	0.87	Accepted

From the analysis of data shown on Table 5, the mean ratings for item 20 to 25 in this cluster were 3.29, 3.30, 3.41, 3.19 and 3.23 respectively with corresponding standard deviations of 0.89, 0.82, 0.79, 0.94 and 0.89. All the mean ratings are above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that the respondents agreed that lack of government enactment policy emphasis on girl-child education affects female low school enrolment. Non-implementation of polices on girl-child education by the government discourages female enrolment in schools. Also that, Nigeria government policy prohibiting girl-child education on the basis of married women and /or girls, who are pregnant or rearing children, tends to affect schools in terms of increase in funding. Moreso, political factors resulting to irregular or non-payment of salaries discourages parents from sending their children to schools and this tends to affect co-educational system and that politicians sometimes hijack certain benefits meant for girl-child education and this tends to affect policy implementation by the school management. The cluster mean of 3.28 with the standard deviations of 0.87 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that political factor influence the girl-child education in secondary schools.

Testing Research Hypotheses

In testing the four hypotheses of this study, the t-test statistical tool was used to test the four hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance and the results are presented on table 5 to 8 and the detailed analysis shown in

Hypotheses one:

Early marriage does not significantly influence girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District.

Table 6: t-test Analysis of the Influence of Early Marriage on the Girl-Child Education in Secondary Schools

Opinion	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
No Effect	35	0.047	298	0.05	70.42	1.96	Ho
Effect	265						Rejected

P < 0.05

The result on the Table 6 shows that t-cal is 70.42 while the t-table is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The t-test results indicate that there is a statistically significant influence of early marriage on the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District. Consequently, the hypothesis (Ho) suggesting no statistically significant influence of early marriage on the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District was therefore rejected. This is a clear indication that early marriage significantly influences the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District (See Appendix III).

Hypotheses Two:

Gender preference does not significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools.

Table 7: t-test Analysis of the Influence of Gender Preference on the Girl-Child Education in Secondary Schools

Opinion	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
No Effect	36	0.047	298	0.043	70.83	1.96	Ho
Effect	264						Rejected

P < 0.05

The result of Table 7 shows that t-cal is 70.83 while the t-table is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The t-test results indicate that there is a statistically significant

influence of gender preference on the girl-child education in secondary schools. Consequently, the hypothesis (Ho) suggesting no statistically significant influence of gender preference does on the girl-child education in secondary schools was therefore rejected. This implies that gender preference significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools (See Appendix IV).

Hypothesis Three:

Socio-cultural factors do not significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools.

Table 8: t-test Analysis of the Influence of Socio-Cultural Factors on the Girl-Child Education in Secondary Schools

Opinion	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
No Effect	54						
		0.052	298	0.05	61.81	1.96	Ho
Effect	246						
							Rejected
P < 0.05							

From the result of analysis of data shown on Table 8, the t-cal is 61.81 while the t-table is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The t-test results indicate that there is a statistically significant influence of socio-cultural factors on the girl-child secondary education. Consequently, the hypothesis (Ho) suggesting no statistically significant influence of socio-cultural factors on the girl-child education in secondary schools was therefore rejected. This implies that socio-cultural factors significantly influence the girl-child secondary education (See Appendix V).

Hypothesis Four:

Socio-economic statuses of parents do not significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools.

Table 9: t-test Analysis of the Influence of Socio-Economic Status of Parents on the Girl-Child Education in Secondary Schools

Opinion	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
No Effect	35	0.046	298	0.05	71.16	1.96	Ho
Effect	265						Rejected

$P < 0.05$

From the result analysis of data as presented on table 9, the t-cal is 71.16 while the t-table is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The t-test results indicate that there is a statistically significant influence of socio-economic status of parents on the girl-child education in secondary schools. Consequently, the hypothesis (Ho) suggesting no statistically significant influence of socio-economic status of parents on the girl-child education in secondary schools was therefore rejected. This implies that socio-economic status of parents significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools (See Appendix VI).

Hypothesis Five:

Political factors do not significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools

Table 10: t-test Analysis of the Influence of Political Factors on the Girl-Child Education in Secondary Schools

Opinion	N	St. error	Df (n-2)	Level of sig	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
No Effect	50	0.051	298	0.05	63.87	1.96	Ho
Effect	250						Rejected

$P < 0.05$

From the result analysis of data as presented on table 10, the t-cal is 63.87 while the t-table is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The t-test results indicate that there is a statistically significant influence of political factors on the girl-child education in secondary schools. Consequently, the hypothesis (Ho) suggesting no statistically significant influence of political factors on the girl-child education in secondary schools was therefore rejected. This implies that political factors significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Early marriage and the girl-child education in secondary schools

Based on the analysis of the five research questions and testing of the five hypotheses, the following findings were organized and discussed here for easy comprehension.

The first finding of this study revealed that early marriage significantly influences the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District. This finding agrees with the opinions of Chivore (1986) who states that early marriage leads to girl child dropout from school temporarily or permanently, before she completes her secondary education. He also notes that dropout has a negative impact on the schools, communities and the country at large. The negative impact may take different forms, for example, a wastage in education resources. He states that girl dropout from school cause educational wastage in the following ways: the money which is invested is under-utilized; materials and resources are not put into use, which is uneconomic; the dropout cannot attain a full educational capacity; consequently, they dropout cannot maximally contribute to the country's economy building; as a result, the dropout becomes a liability to the country instead of being an asset; the dropout reduces opportunities for other children who could have better utilize those resources to the benefit of the country.

Similar in support to the finding, Mawere (2012) observes that early marriage and its attendant girl dropout in many schools, for example, have resulted in some teachers losing their jobs or overstaffing causing some teachers to transfer forcibly to other schools. Such situations create socio-economic and unemployment problems as those teachers who lose jobs are negatively affected. In addition to the finding, Adidi (2003) in his study on the effects of early marriage on girl-child education in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State found that early marriage and early child-bearing affect girls from furthering their education.

Gender preference and girl-child education in secondary schools

The second finding of this study revealed that gender preference significantly influences the girl-child education in secondary schools. This finding corroborates with the views Okpoko (2005) who states that gender preference in favour of boys disappreciates roles and works against the girl child in terms of curriculum, content, structure, relation, and other aspects of school management and educational system. This is why in the school system; there is a general misplaced perception that girls have to be socialized to be wives, home-makers, dependent and secretaries, while boys are to be husbands, doctors, pilots, bread-winners, defenders, engineers, and scientists. Thus, the boys are exposed to a different curriculum than the girls; suggesting that girls do not need a degree in any formal profession such as medicine, engineering and so on to be a good wife. This has affected the management in the planning of the school curriculum, textbooks, and teaching-learning approaches in secondary schools.

In addition, Chege and Sifuna (2006) observe that there are adequacies of school preparation as a factor contributing to girls' lower pass rates. There are specific areas of the curriculum, like mathematics, which are taught less well to girls because teachers consider boys more important to educate or brighter than girls and transmit these attitudes, through different treatment, (Krystall, 1978:59). Furthermore in support to the finding, Amamchukwu (2005) in his study on gender inequality in schools: implications for curriculum planning in Nigeria found that when parents are not able to discharge their obligations to their children like providing the basic needs such as food, shelter, health care and so on, they are forced to withdraw the female children to engage them in some kind of child labour to supplement family income. This reduces female enrolment in schools leading to discrimination or gender preference in school policies.

Socio-cultural factors and the girl-child education in secondary schools

The third finding of this study revealed that socio-cultural factors significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools. This finding is in consonance with the views of Utulu (2001) who notes that traditions have practices that discriminate against the status of girls and women in society and these have negative effects on their psycho-social and educational development. That in Nigerian society, the girl-child is conditioned very early in life to look after the younger ones, the home and the kitchen. Perhaps this is why it is generally believed that the girls place is culturally assumed to be in the kitchen. She is expected to be seen and not to be heard. She stressed further that, these cultural practices have great effect on the self-concept and self-esteem of the girl

in Nigerian society. Socio-cultural believe leads to low investment in female education and hence, low societal demand for female education.

In consonance with the finding, Juma and Simatwa (2014) who observe that cultural factors have a big influence on girl student academic achievement than boys' students. Thus the girl child is subjected to domestic chores daily in case of day schools. As for boarding schools, the girl student is affected mostly during school holidays. Furthermore, they state, the boy child is given preference where financial resources are scare. Hence, the girl child is also affected more by incidents of HIV and AIDS pandemic as the girl student is compelled to take care of the sick siblings and parents as the case may be in serious cases of loss of income, they are forced to drop out of school temporarily to look for food, clothing and at times shelter. When they are readmitted back to schools their performance in class work is generally below average.

In line with the finding, Aba (2000) in his study on cultural practices affecting girl-child education in Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State found that the practices of living the women in the kitchen and rearing of children influence the education of the girl-child.

Socio-economic statuses of parents and girl-child education in secondary schools

The fourth finding of the study revealed that socio-economic statuses of parents significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools. This finding is in agreement with the opinions of Okeke (2011) who observes that families with low socio-economic status find it difficult to send their children to school, due to high cost of education. That in most cases, these parents end up sending the girls to hawk and bring funds to feed the family and train the boys in school, on the bases that the boys will remain with the family and help the family to train the younger ones. Also in line with the finding, Juma and Simatwa (2014) observe that cultural factors have a big influence on girl student academic achievement than boy students. Thus the girl child is subjected to domestic chores daily in case of day schools. As for boarding schools, the girl student is affected mostly during school holidays. Furthermore, they state, the boy child is given preference where financial resources are scare. Hence, the girl student does not attend school regularly as desired. The girl-child is also affected more by incidents of HIV and AIDS pandemic as the girl student is compelled to take care of the sick siblings and parents as the case may be in serious cases of loss of income, they are forced to drop out of school temporarily to look for food,

clothing and at times shelter. When they are readmitted back to schools their performance in class work is generally below average.

Moreso in agreement with the finding, Ola (2000) in his study on the effects of parents' socio-economic status on girl-child education in Bauchi State found that parents' educational level, income level and the locality where they reside influence the education of their children particularly the female ones.

Political factors and girl-child education in secondary schools

The fifth finding of the study revealed that political factors significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools. This finding corroborate with the views of Eshiwani (1993) who notes that the presence of quality school facilities and services are some of the symbols of high educational quality. It is the role of the principal to put in place rules and regulations that will ensure that girls remain in school at all times unless they are participating in educational activities outside the school. She understands the curriculum establishment and plays a key role to increase retention by organizing, planning and coordinating school activities with the girl at center.

In another support to the finding, Abu (2003) adds that the non-implementation of certain polices by the government have also discouraged many parents and female children from enrolling in schools. They believe that after all, the male will manipulate their ways in and take over what is not theirs. In his assertion, he is referring to the non-implementation of the 35 percent women affirmation policy, which states that women should be given 35% of all contestable opportunities, be it, admission into institutions, political offices, appointments, employments, among others. In addition to the finding, Ade (2003) in his study on the effects of government policies on the education of the girl-child in Otukpo Local Government area of Benue State found that lack of employment for the educated women discourage parents from sending their female children to school.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that early marriage, gender preference, socio-cultural factors, socio-economic status of parents and political factors significantly influence the girl-child education in secondary schools in Kebbi Central Senatorial District of Kebbi State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The issue of early marriage should be disabusing in the minds of parents by encouraging and giving them orientation towards educating their child before giving them out for marriage.
2. The child right act should be strengthened and Government should ensure that it is implemented in all states of the country. This would go a long way in checking indiscriminate child abuse and gender disparity.
3. The government should make policy statements that will make the education of the girl-child to be mandatory for all citizens irrespective of culture or tribal practices.
4. The society should encourage girl-child education by awarding scholarships to girls from parents of poor socio-economic status which makes them unable to send their female children to school.
5. Government policies should be geared towards encouraging rather than discouraging parents from sending their children to schools. The female children should also be made to feel they have a place and role in the society and so be prepared to go to school and acquire knowledge and skills that would make them useful and functional in the society.

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