Nigerian OLI 110 of Educational Administration and Planning

Vol. 18, No. 4. 2018

SUPPORTED BY:



PROJECT 2018



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Factors Militating Against the Girl Child Education and Their Consequences on National Cohesion ad Global Competitiveness

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Abstract

The title of the study is "Factors Militating Against the Girl-Child Education and Their Consequences on National Cohesion And Global Competitiveness". In this study, some factors such as level of understanding, level of acceptance, poverty, parental illiteracy, ignorance of benefits accrued, religious practices, cultural practices, traditional prejudices, were studied to find out their effects on the education of the Girl-child. The population of the study were all the Female academics in Edo State, tertiary institutions. Three hundred and eleven (311) of them were sampled purposively. Data were collected through the questionnaire, which was content validated by experts and had a reliability value of 0.72. Data retrieved were analyzed using frequency and percentage for research questions and Pearson(r) for the hypothesis. Eight (8) research questions were raised and one (1) hypothesis was formulated. The study found out among others that six (6) out of eight (8) factors studied were challenges

confronting the education of the girl-child and furthermore, there was a significant relationship between these factors and the girl-child education. These findings helped to discuss the consequences on national cohesion and global competitiveness. Recommendations/suggestions were made based on findings.

Keywords: Girl-child Education, National Cohesion and Global Competitiveness.

Introduction

Education is a multi-task pill that is as effective as a clean breadth of air and as the clean drinking water to the body. Its efficacy cannot be quantified nor over emphasized. A lot of authors all over the world have nothing but good things to say about its advantages, it is a mind liberator that everybody should have. There are different mediums of acquiring education but this paper is mainly concerned about formal education acquired within the four walls of the school. In Nigeria, a lot has been written on the girl-child education and It continue to take centre stage in the minds of scholars because the nation is yet to get to the position of rest about this matter. Hindrances against the girl-child education are numerous some of which will be looked at in this study.

Statement of the problem

The fact that women are still not fully represented as partners in progress in the nation, giving the fact that they are 48% of the population according to censor 2006, Population References Breau (2012), brings worry, the fact that government's programmes, policies, to encourage the girl-child education, the fact that seminars, conventions, conference, foras, workshop have been mounted up as a result of the girl-child education, despite the researches by scholars regarding this matter nothing seems to work to break the strongholds against the education of the girl-childand this failure is showing at the top echelon of the nation's life. One begins to wonder what the problem really is ?, every sector of the economy records over 90% of men in

leadership positions, Eguavoen (2017), Osarenren-osaghae, isabu and imoroa (2018). The total shut down of the female folks that make up 48% of the nation is worrisome. Every woman started life as a little girl and if there are stumbling blocks on the path of her academic growth process, she will not grow up well, if she managed to grow at all. It will be difficult for her to get to her apex where she can exhibit her Godgiven talents, gifts and hidden treasures, the consequences of this, is that her contributions to the nation's growth and development will be lost for ever. This worry is a worry perhaps felt by few, and the rest of the nation move on as if it is insignificant but it is significant because the few women at the top are usually victims of intimidation and sidelining from their male counterpart due to their majority, the confidence of the women is eroded and this may affect her contributions. These worries made up the relevance of the study, This study dugged deeper to find out from female academics, the factors that are militating against the education of the girl-child. It is hoped that the findings of the study will help the government and other stakeholders to get information and eradicate the problems confronting the girlchild education, which will consequently eliminate barriers and more women will get to the top, creating a conducive environment for them and their male counterparts to complement each other and contribute meaningfully to national development, which in turn can help to foster the nation's ability to compete favourably on the international stage.

Research Questions

To guide the study eight (8) research questions were raised and one hypothesis was formulated thus:

- 1. Is poverty a factor that is a hindrance to the education of the girl-child?
- 2. Is parental illiteracy one of the challenges confronting the education of the girl-child?
- 3. Is level of understanding an obstacle to the education of the girl-child?
- 4. Is ignorance of benefits accrued to the girl-child education an

- obstacle to the education of the girl-child?
- 5. Is religion a hindrance to the education of the girl-child?
- 6. Are traditional prejudices a force to be reckoned with in terms of the education of the girl-child?
- 7. Is the level of acceptance by community a factor militating against the education of the girl-child?
- 8. Are cultural practices a factor against the education of the girlchild?
 - For the purpose of this study, the above factors in a nutshell were regarded as socio-economic factors. Therefore, one hypothesis was formulated thus:
- 1. There is no significant relationship between socio-economic factors and the education of the girl-child.

Scope

There may be other factors hindering the education of the girl-child but this study was only concerned with the above mentioned eight (8). Only five (5) out of the ten (10). tertiary institutions in Edo state participated in this study and they included: Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Auchi polytechnic, Auchi, Benson Idahosa University, Benin, College of Education, Ekiaodolor and University of Benin, Benin city.

Limitations of the study

Questionnaires were not easy to retrieve because of the busy and tight schedules of the respondents; this was actually the major reason why only five out of the ten schools were used for the study. Also the finding of the study may not be generalized because only Edo State tertiary institutions data were collected and analysed, however, it must be highlighted here that Edo state is one of the Educationally inclined state in Nigeria, even though there are still traces of discrimination and discrepancies between the education of the boy and the girl child found is some communities.

Literature Review

Poverty

Parental poverty according to Kpee & Chuu-Uzomah, (2015) is a situation where a parent is unable to provide the basic needs for the family even at a minimal level, accessibility of education to children from such homes are difficult. The burden is more on the girl-child who is less likely to be given opportunity for education should there be any. They reiterated that when financial challenges come up in the family, the girl-child is given out as collateral for loan or forced into early marriage. Early marriage which tend to further impoverish women and subject them to statutory discrimination such as preferring to educate a boy-child over a girl-child. The progression of women through schooling has been low with large dropout rate, only 18.64% of girls who finished primary school proceed to secondary school, with an average drop-out rate of 80.16%, The average dropout rate from secondary school to higher institution was 93.15% (Moja, 2000), Obayan, (2014). The girl-child from a low socio - economic background may find it difficult to be educated. Even where primary education is technically free in Universal Basic Educations (UBE), additional charges for uniforms, books, transport fare to and fro school, create financial burden for their parents (Igbinedion and Maha, 2015).

Parental Illiteracy

Nigeria still has a lot of illiterate mothers through the backlogs of illiterate parents, who did not send their girls to schools, backlogs of illiterate children who are now parents and their mentality about educating their girl child span from decades back, It is a vicious cycle that refuse to stop even in the face of Government Interventions, Watkin (2013), Ajimodu (2013), Yawe and Amaechi (2015). The education status of the parent can affect the decision to send their children to school or not. It is illiteracy of parents that will make them to send their boy child to school and leave the girl to hawk on the streets and sell in market stores, It is illiteracy that will make them think that the girl child is another man's wife therefore training her is of no

benefit to them, Orimogunje (2012) asserts that it is also illiteracy that will make parents to think that their girl child is less superior than their boy child, and It is only illiterate parents that believe that marrying off their girl-child brings more profits than educating her.

Level of understanding

Majority of Human beings are naturally, afraid of the unknown, it is often said that 'the devil you know is better than the angel you don't know and perhaps this concept may have contributed to the reasons why the nation has remained under developed and transferring technology because they are afraid to explore. It is one thing to have a concept but another thing to sell it and actually make the beneficiaries see reasons they should buy into the concept. The concept of training/educating every Nigerian child so as to eliminate illiteracy, its wow! and beautiful!, but the actions the proponents take when implementing this concept, do not portray seriousness, such as inadequate funding, training of teachers, etc. the beautiful concept is only beautiful at the dream state while in reality children are still being used during school hours to fetch money for their parents. There is a level of understanding that a proponent will need to give out in order for the recipients to receive and work with, when a new concept is not deeply understood, by the recipients and your actions don't match your words, they go right back to their comfort zone. Nigerians must of a necessity have a deeper understanding of the girl-child education because an educated girl is a better person to dialogue with, acquired knowledge will make her a bettercitizen, wife, mother etc. UNESCO (2011), United Nation Human Development (UNHD) Report (2010), Kpee & Chuu-Uzomah (2015).

Ignorance of benefits Accrued

The lack of knowledge of the benefits accrued to the girl-child education, may have contributed immensely to the reasons why the society cannot flow with Government efforts to eradicate illiteracy or see it as a worthwhile venture, Abdulkadir, (2004), Kpee and Chuu-

Uzomah(2015), When the purpose of a thing is unknown, abuse is inevitable. Ignorance is a disease that kills individuals and Nations more than any terminal disease that one can think of, Education of women according to Makama (2013), enables her and the nation to harness the hidden or untapped potentials geared towards National Development. But if a girl-child is deprived access to education and skills for productive employment, it will have far reaching effects in terms of poverty creation and perpetuation in the present as well as in the next generation (Safilios-Rothschild, 1991). There are so many benefits accrued to the education of the girl-child which this work have not comprehensively covered, but UNESCO (2008) and other numerous publications have enumerated a few. Educated women also educate their children. Education will enhance a girl's parental roles in National Development. Education gets rid of intimidation, and it is an eye opener, that broadens her reasoning horizon.

Religious practices

It has been observed that religions in Nigeria, especially some Christian denominations and Islamic practices do not believe in the education of the girl-child, the Northern parts of Nigeria, for example which practice mainly Islamic religion, restricts the movement of their girls, but If and when they must go to school they do it near their homes called "Makaranta" meaning school, where they are taught how to recite the Holy Koran (their religious book), chant some verses and chapters in Arabic songs, at the end, they go home. The girl-child or any child for that matter, is not given a western education, for the fear that they will deviate from their Islamic faith and follow western pattern of lifestyle which they abhor, therefore, they are deprived of the kind of education that can help them blend with others and have a broader view of life. This is perhaps why people think and believe that it is synonymous to Islamic religion, but on a second thought, when one takes a look at the Arabs and other nations who brought these religion to Africa, their daughters are allowed to go to schools with western education orientations and they don't give out their tender daughters in

marriage until matured enough. These thoughts raises some basic questions, as this behaviour may not be religion-related and may raise questions such as could this practice in northern Nigeria be as a result of poverty?, illiteracy?, Cultural practices? Or are there two types of Islamic religions?. These questions certainly need answers, it has also been observed that northerners who dare to go to school are always, exceptionally intelligent, excellent, polished, both in speech and character, why will any parent not want such attributes for their daughters?. It is certain that if prophet mohammed had a daughter, he would have schooled her because he loved knowledge, strived to acquire it and passed it on to others.

Traditional prejudices

The traditional believes that women were made to satisfy men's sexual urges, prepare their meals, have their babies, go to farm, manage the home, don't need school, e.t.c., have over the years pushed women into timidity and in many ways affected their mentality, ambitions which consequently affected their public life.Patriarchy and girl-child marriage are also factors of traditional prejudices against the women. The power and authority granted to men to take dominion are sometimes misplaced and used as an oppressive weapon against women/girls. Traditionally, women are to be seen and not heard, consequently, a woman who is seen and heard, is considered to be living the life of a man. She is cautioned even by her fellow women and threatened with a divorce, by her husband and in-laws if she refuses to retrace her steps. People will shout her down, to remember her place, embarrass her and call her "prostitute", and other unpalatable names. A woman who dare to go outside the box, are cut off by friends and some family members. Some women cut her off because their husbands see her as a bad influence on their wives. This is so, because she dared to cross the line of freedom, she is seen as a deviant because she went against traditional norms, Amaechina et al (2015), Olaleye (2008), see these prejudices as an inhibiting factor to the girl-child education.

Level of acceptance by the community

Level of acceptance by the community is a challenge in this study. Women's mentality has been so programmed in such a way that even when they sees another woman trying to excel out of the box, they are angry and unsupportive of her. The society is shaped in such a way that there are roles for male and females and on no account should the boundaries be crossed. Some part of Nigeria simply refuse to accept the girl-child education. This level of acceptance is the reason why a great grandfather will marry a twelve years old girl without guilt in his conscience and other men around will clap and hail him. The cycle of the level of acceptance is difficult to break because Nigerian women have lived in a male dominated environment for centuries and the females are under subjection even when the female are more in number, Ejumodu (2013), Makama (2013). Nobody has the opportunity to choose his/her sex otherwise everybody would have chosen to be the male because of the life of freedom they live. The fact that people arrogate males as more superior than females is a sign of illiteracy. Some males object to education of the girl-child for obvious reasons which include illiteracy, lack of understanding, unwillingness to change the status quo of the girl-child, because education is the light that when acquired, the position of the girl-child will change for the better. The myopic mentality of some illiterate men will not allow them to see the much greater benefits that lie within the girl-child education. Nigerians need a greater level of acceptance from men and women before the benefit can be seen and enjoyed by all.

Cultural practices

It is generally believed that the position of a girl-child is subservient. Culture has placed a lot of demand on her, as the one who should do most of the domestic chores like; fetching water, firewood, farm work, care for her siblings, prepare meals, clean the house, wash dishes, etc. Marginalization of women arising from traditional, social cultural, socio-economic and religious constraints, deny them full access to

political participation, in spite of the overwhelming contributions that women have made, are making and are expected to make to the socioeconomic development of the Nation, they are still frustrated with many obstacles that tend to limit their activities says (Amaechina et al 2015). Olaleye (2008), posited that debates on the status of women and the need to integrate them into development process of any Nation have included both National and International workshops, seminars, fora, conferences, conventions etc. but the problems of women opportunities for education looms large at the turn of twenty-first century in Africa and according to Okojie (2011), Ejumodu, (2013), women represents two-thirds of the world illiterate adults while girls account for a singular proportion of the world's out of school population. It has been realized that sustainable human development cannot be effective if half of the human race remain ignorant, marginalized and discriminated against (UNESCO, (2010), Olomukoro And Oyitso, (2014).

Method of study

The descriptive research design was adopted for the study, the population of the study were all the 2017/2018 female academic staff of all the tertiary institutions in Edo state, out of which three hundred and eleven (311) of them were proportionately sampled as respondents. Questionnaire Titled: social-Economic factors militating against the education of the girl-child (SEFMAEGCQ) was used to collect data from field, this was constructed by the researchers, contents were validated by experts for the purpose of precision, relevance and unambiguity. The reliability value obtained was 0.72. The statistical tools used for analysis of data collected were the frequency and percentage for research questions and Pearson product moment correlations coefficient (r) for the hypothesis.

Result and Discussion Table 1: General result

S/N	Statements on: Education of the girl-child.	N	Freq. Agree	% Agree	Freq. Disagr	ee % Disagr	ee Decisio n
1	Educating a girl -child is still contested today in some part of Nigeria especially in the rural areas.	311	197	63.3	114	36.7	Agree
2	The level of acceptance of the girl child education in Nigeria, is one of the factors hindering girl -child education	311	173	55.8	138	44.2	Agree
3	Some cultural practices are oppressive to the female folks, which in turn affect their education.	311	191	61.4	120	38.6	Agree
4	Poverty is one of the factors militating against the education of the girl-child.	311	140	45.0	171	55.0	Disagree
5	Parental illiteracy has adverse effects on the education of the girl child.	311	193	62.0	118	38.0	Agree
6	Ignorance of the benefits accrued to the girl -child education is one of the causes hindering the education	311	256	82.3	55	17.7	Agree
	Level of understanding is a crucial cause against the education of girl child in Nigeria.	311	216	69.5	95	30.55	Agree
3	Religions believes is one of the factor that cause parents not to educate their girl-child.	311	120	38.6	191	61.4	Disagree
	Traditional prejudices play a major role as one of the factors that hinder the education of the girl-child.	311	199	63.98	112	36.02	Agree
0	Some cultural practices in Nigeria is a factor that militate against the education of the girl-child	311	205	65.9	106	34.1	Agree

Results:

Research question 1: Is "Poverty" a Factor that is a hindrance to the Education of the girl-child?

Table 2: Frequency and percentage Analysis of "poverty" as a challenge against the full delivery of the girl-child education.

221	Statement Item	N	Freq	Agree %	Agree Freq	Disagree %	Disagree Decision
4	Poverty is one of the militating factors against the education of the girl-child	311	140	45.0	171	55.0	Disagree

From table 2 above, 140 (45.0%) respondents agreed while 171 (55.0%) respondents disagreed. It is deduced from this analysis that poverty was not one of the challenges confronting the education of the girl-child.

Research question 2: Is "Parental illiteracy" One of the challenges confronting the education of the girl-child? Table 3:

Frequency and percentage analysis of parental illiteracy as a factors challenging the successful implementation of the girl-child education.

NVC	Statement Item	N	b	ree		ree	5	agree		sagree	cision
N/S		N	Fre	Ag	%	Ag	Fre	Dis	%	Dis	
5	Parental illiteracy has adverse effects on the education of the girl - child	311	Hillian	193	(52.0		118	3	38.0	Agree

From the table above, It can be seen that 193 (62.0%) responded in agreement, while 118 (38.0%) disagreed with the statement. It is concluded therefore, that parental illiteracy was one of the challenges hindering the education of the girl-child.

Research question 3: Is "level of understanding" an obstacle to the Education of the girl-child?

Table 4:Frequency and percentage analysis of the level of understanding as an obstacle to the education of the girl-child.

No	Statement Item	N	Freq	Agree	%	Agree	Freq	Disagr	ee	%	Disagr	ee	decisio	u
7	Level of understanding is a crucial cause against the education girl child in Nigeria.	311	2	216	6	9.5		95			30.5		Ag	ree

From table 4 above, 216 respondents which represented 69.45% agreed while 95 respondents which represents 30.55% disagreed. From this statistics it can be deduced that level of understanding was a factor militating against the education of the girl-child.

Research question 4: Is "Ignorance of benefits accrued" a factor militating against the education of the girl-child?

Table 5: Frequency and percentage analysis of "ignorance of the accrued benefits" as a challenge faced by the girl-child education.

No	Statement item	N	Freq	Agree %	Agree Freq	Disagre %	Disagre	9
6	Ignorance of the benefits accrued to the girl- child education is one of the causes hindering the education of the girl-child.	311	256	82.3	55	17.7 Agre		

From the above table, 256 (82.3) respondents agreed while 55 (17.7) disagreed with the statement, therefore "ignorance" is a factor constituting a challenge against the girl-child education.

Research question 5: Is "religion" a hindrance to the education of the girl-child?

Table 6: Frequency and percentage analysis of religious practices as a challenge to the full delivery of the girl-child education.

No	Statement Item	N	Freq	Agree	%	Agree Freq	Disagre	%	Disagre Decisio	u
8	Religions practices is one of the factors that militate against the education of the girl-child	311	12	20	38.6	191		61.4	Di	sagree

From the table above, 120 (38.6%) agreed, while 191(61.4%) disagreed, meaning that religious practices did not constitute a challenge to the full delivery of the girl-child education.

Research question 6: Are "traditional prejudices" a negative force against the Education of the girl-child?

Table 7: Frequency and percentage analysis of traditional prejudices as challenge standing against the girl-child education.

No	Statement Item	N	Freq	Agree %	Agree Freq	Disagre	Disagre Decisio n
9	Traditional prejudices play a major role as one of the factors that hinder the education of a girl-child	311	199	63.9	8 112	36.02	Agree

From the table above, 199 (63.98%) agreed while 112 (36.02%) disagreed, the conclusion therefore is that traditional prejudices do indeed stand as a stronghold against the education of the girl-child. Research question 7: Is the "level of acceptance" by the

community, a factor that is militating against the education of the girl-child?

Table 8: Frequency and percentage Analysis of the level of acceptance of the girl-child education as a factor militating against the education of the girl-child

No	Statement Item	N	Freq	Agree	%	Agree	Freq	Disagr	ee	%	Disagr	ee	decisio	п
7	The level of acceptance of the girl-child education in Nigeria., is one of the factors hindering girl-child education	311	2	216	(59.5	1100	95		3	30.5		Ag	ree

From the table 8 above, 216(69.5%) Agreed while 95(30.5%) Disagreed. Which means that, the Level of acceptance was a challenge against the full actualization of the girl-child education.

Research question 8: Are "cultural practices" a factor against the education of the girl-child?

Table 9: Frequency and percentage analysis of cultural practices as challenge against the girl-child education.

No	Statement Item	N	Freq	Agree %	Agree	Freq	Disagree %	Disagree Decision
9	Cultural prejudice in Nigeria is a factor that is militating against the education of the girl-child	311	199	63.9	98	112	36.02	Agr e

From table 9, it was found out that 199(63.98%) agreed that cultural practices is one of the factors militating against the education of the girl-child, while 112 (36.02%) disagreed, therefore cultural practices as a factor was seen to be militating against the education of the girl-child.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the socioeconomic factors of the study and the education of the girl-child.

Table 10: Pearson(r) analysis of the Relationship between the socioeconomic factors of the study and Education of the girl-child.

Variable	N	X	SD	df	Pearso n (r) Cal.	P. value	Decisi
Socio-economic factors	311	1.85	.880	309	.932	0.003	Null hypothesis Rejected
		3.22	.629				

Girl-Child Education

It was found out from this study, that there were six (6) out of the eight (8) factors studied that were militating against the education of the girl-child; These included: level of acceptance, cultural practices, Parental illiteracy, ignorance of benefits accrued, level of understanding and traditional prejudices, while poverty and religious practices were not factors that constituted obstacles to the education of the girl-child. There was a significant relationship between the socio-economic factors of the study and the education of the girl-child.

Discussion

National cohesion and global competitiveness do not happen through the thin air, a calculated, deliberate strategies need to be put in place and purposefully pursued to their logical end. What is national cohesion? Simply put Is "national unity" unity in social, political, economic, tribal, religion, gender, e.t.c. Everybody must be carried along, no matter the area of the nation the citizen belongs. What is Global Competitiveness? Simply put it is a fight to get a spot in the global stage and not just a "spot" but a winning spot, that will have people of all races, tribes, nations coming over to do business with the nation. In other words, Nigeria must be attractive enough to other nations on earth and have the power to magnetize them to do business.

Censors report of 2006 was males 52% and females 48%, If women are indeed 48% of the population, it is wise to integrate them in to national affairs so as to actualize cohesion. They need to be given the opportunities and helps to enable them bring out their hidden potentials that will make the nation develop at a faster rate. Development

according to Gwani, (2001) in Ogunboyede, (2002), reads; "As Realization and exploitation of an individual or society's potentials for personal, economic, political and socio-cultural benefits". The five main objectives of national development are thus: (1) A free and democratic society, (2) A just and egalitarian society, (3) A united strong and self-reliant nation, (4) A great and dynamic economy and (5) A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens, (National Policy on Education (NPE), 2013). For a moment, It felt like the United states of America was being described but these are Nigeria's goals that has been in place since Nigeria was born, 58 years ago. The nation can not even compete in West Africa, much less in the global communities. The reasons for this are not far-fetched, when 48% of the population is kept in the dark, oppressed and not fully allowed to participate in the nations affairs due to systemic discrimination, it is virtually impossible to get to the state of development that the five main goals have enumerated. It was also reiterated that economic development is dependent on mental, physical health and quality of its citizenry. A seven (7) year study of sixty (60) countries by Psacharopoulour, (1985) showed a high positive correlation between Investment in education and economic growth and development, since this is the case, Nigerian government should go all out to see the wellbeing of all the citizens, by providing the education that works for everybody.

Uzoma (2013), enumerated some effort of government toward the education of the girl-child which included: Blueprint on woman's Education, National Commission for mass Literacy and Non-Formal Education, Family support Basic Education program, Universal basic Education Program, Education for all (EFA), Fast track initiatives, Strategy for acceleration of girls education in Nigeria (SAGEN), National Economic Empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS), Universal Basic Education act etc. In addition, the Federal Government has also worked closely and actively in collaboration with International bodies such as International Development partners (I.D.P.), Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), IDP include Organizations such as UNICEF, DFID, UNESCO, USAID, WORLD

BANK etc. Ohaji (2005) also reported that Nigeria is a signatory to major international initiatives and conventions which include: Conventions on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the United Nation Girls Education Initiatives (UNGEI), World Conference on Education for all (EFA), Jomtien, Girls Education project (GEP) in joint collaboration with Department for international Development (DFID) and UNICEF to boost girls international in Northern Nigeria. The above listed efforts seem not to have imparted significantly on the girl-child education in Nigeria. Children are still found hawking during the school hours, the government enacted laws to fight this trend but lack of follow up, accountability, corruption e.t.c. have not allowed them to work. Africa, with the exception of Rwanda has the widest gap in gender in the world with Nigeria being amongst the lowest ranking. (UnitedNations global gender gap report, 2016)

The lag in education suffered by the girl-child from primary to secondary suggest that the proceeding level of education in tertiary education would admit fewer females and this situation places the women folks in a disadvantaged position to contribute to the socioeconomic development of the nation. Kpee & Chuu – Uzomah, (2015) calls it a chain of under representation of the female folks from education to governance.

This under representation runs through all sectors of the economy, whether public or private. In politics, looking at the statistics of sex distribution at various legislative houses in the past five election years in Nigeria (1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015), it can be seen that men held over 90% (ninety percent) of the positions according to (Eguavoen 2017), in academics, a current study by Osarenren–Osaghae, Isabu & Imoroa (2018), looked at sex distribution in ledership positions using Ambrose Alli University and university of Benin as case studies in the 2016/2017 session and compared them to the sex distribution in leadership positions by Efoghe, 1998/1999 session in Efoghe (2017), it was shocking to find out that even in academics, women are still in the same position they were almost

twenty (20) years ago. Below is a glimpse of the findings. Table 11: Efoghe, (2017)

Table 11: Ambrose Alli University Leadership Positions
Distribution by sex, 1998/1999 session

Position	Male	Female	Total	
Vice Chancellor	1	nached bet	1,000	
Deputy Vice Chancellor	2		2	
Deans of faculties	9		9	
Directors	2		2	
Head of Department	38	4	42	
Total	52	4	56	

Efoghe, 2017

Table 12: Ambrose Alli University Leadership Positions

Distribution by sex, 2016/2017 session

Position	Male	Female	Total	
Vice Chancellor	1	SMORP SOLD I	1	
Deputy Vice Chancellor	2		2	
Registrar	1		1	
Bursar	1		1	
Librarian		1 2 1 2	1	
Provost		1	1	
Directors	15	1	16	
Deans	13	1	14	
Head of Departments	59	7	66	
Total	92	11	103	

Fieldwork: Osarenren-Osaghae et al 2016/2017 session
Table 13: <u>University of Benin Leadership Positions Distribution by</u>
sex. 2016/2017 session

Position	Male	Female	Total
Vice Chancellor	1		1
Deputy Vice Chancellor	3		3
Registrar		1	1
Bursar	1		1
Librarian		1	1
Provost	1		1
Directors	23	5	28
Deans	14	1	15
Head of Departments	81	11	92
Total	124	19	143

Fieldwork: Osarenren-Osaghae et al 2016/2017 session

Other sectors of the economy are not left out in this trend. This is perhaps, due to the very high rate of drop out from primary and secondary schools.

Poverty was not seen by the female academics as a factor that militated against the education of the girl-child, perhaps because if the same poor family had the opportunity of one chance to train any of the children, the boy child will be picked over the girl-child even when the girl-child is more academically sound and also, perhaps of the federal government program to educate all children through the instrumentality of the Universal Basic Education, which is free education, therefore they see no excuse for the poor.

Religion was not also seen by them as a factor that hindered the girlchild education. This is probably because the entire respondents were Christians and from the southern part of Nigeria. It may have a different result if the respondent were from the north, or other parts of the nation. A lot of articles for years have apportioned blame to the Islamic religion for not educating their Girls, amongst such assertions were: Osindeinde, (2000), Emetarom, (2000), Salami & Uko-Aviomah (2000), Uruakpa, (2004), Obi, (2011), Igbinedion & Maha (2015), Amaechina, Briggs & Ewelike (2015). But in disagreement with this view, islamic scholars have posited that the Quran and the hadith do not discourage girls from education especially in sports, Momodu (2000) asserts that Islam has never opposed or rejected rights of women to engage in physical activities but "they must wear modest sport costumes and must not mix with men during training", Alansari (1999) also asserted that the lack of knowledge among Muslim women about the importance of sports also seem to be among the main obstacles that prevent women from participating in sports. From the quotation by momoduabove, it is obvious that the Quran and Hadith also have some blame. How can the holy books state that women/girls don't mix with men/boys during sports practices, the understanding is that, women should stay away from men and in the education of the girl-child, there must of a necessity be boys around, either as fellow students or as teachers and after, graduation, it is also of a necessity that the girl-child who is now a woman must work with the men folks in their employment, by not mixing with boys/men in school, it is an indirect instruction from the holy books, to stay away from school, because they will surely meet boys/men. The question now is: will they continue to stay indoors? And for how long will parents continue to lock up their daughters without education for better living?.

The educational status of the parents matter when deciding the education of the children. Some illiterate mothers may not see the need to send their daughter to school. She would prefer her to help her in the kitchen, follow her to the farm, help her with the house chores, make some money through hawking of goods etc. she will see her daughter more economically viable in this regard than to send her to school, because she does not have the understanding why she should send her

daughter to school and until she understands and fully accept this phenomenon, education of her daughter through school will be impossible. She will bring Up, illiterate daughter who eventually becomes a mother that will also bring up illiterate daughter, the cycle goes on and on and until it is broken, the vicious cycle continues.

Level of acceptance by the community is also a factor that is important to the education of the girl-child, if the community don't accept the idea of a girl-child education; it will be difficult for the government to implement. There are still some part of Nigeria that still find it difficult to accept the idea of girls going to school and that is why a few disgruntled men called Boko-haram can go to a secondary school hostel to kidnap two hundred and seventy-six (276) girls in April 2014, got away with it and up till now the government is yet to recover all the girls, as if that was not enough another recent, incident involving Dapchi girls abduction that took place in February 2018, were over one hundred of them. This is absolutely absurd!!!, in the 21st century???, Helloooo!!!, who knows when the next kidnapping will be?. For centuries women have been oppressed, dehumanized, intimidated, relegated, felt less superior than her male counterpart. Nigerians need a greater level of acceptance from men and women before the benefits can, be enjoyed. it is one thing to put up a concept like the girl -child education and another for the concept to be successfully implemented with the cooperation of the people, especially the beneficiaries. Nigeria has lived a system of patriarchy, where men have dominated for centuries and now to suggest to men that their daughters will go to school, to them it means, they may not get married on time and may not be submissive to the man. This is a scare to some men folks therefore, it will take a lot of frequent campaigns explaining and convincing to get them to cooperate, without these drastic moves, their understanding will be shallow and they may likely not cooperate.

Ignorance of benefits accrued was also found out to be a factor militating against the education of the girl-child. There is a saying that goes that when the purpose of a thing is unknown, abuse is inevitable.

The lack of knowledge of the benefits accrued to the girl-child education is perhaps the reason why the society cannot accept the government proposal and efforts to eradicate illiteracy or see it as a worthwhile venture. There are so many benefits accrued to girl-child education, some of which were already listed. Yawe and Amaechi(2015) posited that education and gender equality should be fully recognized as mutual reinforcing catalyst of development and further asserted that the millennium development goals(MDG) cannot be realized, unless girls and women have the knowledge and skills that education can provide to better their lives, families and communities.

Traditional prejudices were also found to be factors that had hindered the full realization of the education of the girl-child. The traditional scenario in Nigeria is such that the society is shaped in such a way that there are roles for males and females passed down by forefathers and on no account should the boundaries be crossed. In these roles, the females are not supposed to go to school because it is believed that they become troublesome, difficult for their husbands to control, more enlightened with the issues of life and therefore, have little need for men to take care of them, liberated and more economically empowered, the traditions frowns against these qualities for the females. Over the years, women have come to believe that they were created to serve men. If women were really cooperating with one another, a lot of girls would have been educated and thus positioned to deliver and contribute their quota to the development of the nation. Traditional prejudices according to olaleye (2008), Amaechina et al (2015). Is seen as inhibiting factors to the girl-child education and participation in public life such as politics, education, science, technology and competing with their male counterparts.

Cultural practices were also found in this study to be a factor of hindrance to the education of the girl-child. Babawale (2008) assert that the peculiarities of a given culture is a direct function of its distinctiveness as it relates to its impact On the attitude, aspirations, motivation, representations, skill and behaviour of the people. From

the definition, it can be deduced that cultures are shaped based on practices of the people and no doubt that some of the cultural practices are against gender equality because of the traditional believes of the people. Females were 48% out of 170.1 million Nigerians as at 2006, Nigeria is endowed with three hundred and eighty-nine (389) ethnic groups in the thirty-six (36) states of the federation and federal capital territory, Abuja. and 54% according to population reference Bureau (2012), still live under the poverty line. it is important to note that when government/Rulers are insensitive to the plight of 48% out of 100%, of the citizens, it is impossible to succeed. The full integration of women and girls in the Nation's affaires is integral to the cohesion and global competitiveness of the nation. The fact that Nigeria is still going through the same problem of the girl-child education shows the unseriousness of the constituted authorities that have been empowered to implement.

Conclusion

It is concluded that six (6) out of eight (8) factors studied were factors militating against the education of the girl-child, as enumerated above and, there was a significant relationship between social-economic factors and education of the girl-child. The fact that anything is a factor that hinders the education of the girl-child is enough for the stakeholders to be worried and putting measures in place to assure the Uproot of all obstacles. The government have tried to put laws in place, empowering the police to arrest any child found hawking during school hours and the courts to charge fines or/and to put in prison any parent(s) who failed to register their children/wards in schools. No one is above the law not even the northern part of the nation where child-bride is rampant, buthow many parents have been put in prison to serve as a deterrent to others? The question is: "is the government really interested in the education of the girl-child, or is it playing 'politics as usual' with the girl-child education to show the world that something is being done, whereas nothing is being done.

Every stakeholder must as a matter of urgency, take action, not words

to see the end of every hindrance militating against the education of the girl-child, there must be a total emancipation of women from every traditional and cultural strong holds. Women and girls need to be properly and appropriately integrated into the nation's sectors of political, social, economical arenas of the nation to encourage national cohesion which will eventually lead the nation into prosperity that will qualify her for global competitiveness with other nations of the world, otherwise, the nation may never get to her promise land.

Suggestions/Recommendations

The following suggestions have been put forward to help solve the problems that are militating against the education of the girl-child.

- Vigorous and constant follow-up of the implementation of laws and policies put up for the education of the girl-child should be mounted, let arrests be made and/or fines paid to serve as a deterrent to others who may want to cause obstacles to the education of their daughters.
- As women are half of the population, common sense should tell
 rulers to bring in women to the table to plan and compliment
 men in the running of the nation so as to actualize vision
 20:2020, which is right now at the front burner and a platform
 for global competitiveness.
- For poor parents to stop complaining, the federal government should provide adequate needs for the implementations of the U.B.E. program and also do a proper follow-up to make sure all girls are educated.
- 4. Local languages be used as a medium of communication to foster effective understanding especially to citizens without formal education.
- All hands must be on deck as regards vigorous and non-stop enlightenment programs which will include door to door campaign and other drastic and Continuous measures until understanding is gained.
- 6. Posters, billboards, internet, audio/visual and print mediums be

- engaged to buttress the benefits to the public continuously.
- 7. Religion is a man-made concept, it should not take center-stage in the education of the girl-child because God created the male and the female equally, nobody chose his/her gender, women can only be submissive to their own husbands not to all men.
- 8. All those archaic traditional prejudices against the girl-child in general be uprooted, thrown away and replaced with kinder gestures.
- 9. The federal, state, local governments and other stakeholders must put in more effort so that the citizens especially the femaleshave an in dept understanding, accept reality and work with it. Stakeholders must put measure on ground to foster better acceptance of the girl-child Education.
- 10. There are some cultural practices that sideline women and girls and perpetually keep them in the dark in virtually everything. The government should make laws and implement them appropriately to deal with family members who oppose the government laws that have been put up for the actualization of the girl-child education. Girls must be free from bondage so that the nation can move forward.

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