

Relationship Between Belief And Educational Achievement Among Women And Under-Aged Of North-Eastern Nigeria: A Qualitative Approach

¹SulaimanJibrilBabayo, ²Assc. Professor RohanaBintYusof,
³DrKhalthumBint Haj.Hassan

*Department of Sociology College of Law, Government and International Studies
Universiti Utara Malaysia*

Abstract:*The educational achievement of womenfolk and under-aged in Northern Nigeria has been extremely low for many decades. People misconceive religious doctrines due to illiteracy and gender insensitivity thereby, denying women and under-aged education. This paper introspects into the association between religiosity and educational achievement of under-aged and women in North-eastern Nigeria. Interviews were conducted with 20 respondents, including- teachers (principals and headmasters), traditional leaders, a medical personnel, and a cleric. The study was aimed at inquiring “if women in North-eastern Nigeria are prohibited being educated by religion. Second, the interviewees’ opinion on religious ignorance among parents who deny education of their children and; the possible solution to the problem of religious ignorance on the educational achievement of women and children in North-eastern Nigeria”. The result indicated that most parents do not value education of their children, especially the female children. In order to proffer solution, the respondents’ views indicated that parents needed to value their children’s education; governments should adequately support children’s education, and also need for married female students to continue their educational pursuit. The study suggests that future research should include the views of the children out of school and women whose education pursuit was truncated as a result of getting married.*

Keywords: Belief, Educational Achievement, Women, Under-Aged

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Offorma (2008), education is the process meant for the provision of adequate vital information to those who are inexperienced. These inexperienced persons include the boy-child, girl-child, and the adult who did not acquire literacy during their childhood. The under-aged and the womenfolk if educated, stand the chance of physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, political and economic development in their respective communities and the larger society. The importance of education in the lives of humans necessitates the basis of the statement made by the Vice-Chancellors of Universities while graduating their students during the award of their various degrees saying, “... you have been found worthy in character and learning...” (Alabi, *et al.* 2014).

Family, according to Ibrahim (1997) is defined as a small unit of human civilisation, which is fast declining in its size and composition. Certain traditional practices, beliefs, and other cultural traits impact negatively on the educational achievement of women and under-aged in some societies. Spadaccini, B. & Nichols, P., 2014 and Solomon, JA; CJ Murray, H Kloos, & DH Mariam 2001, argued that there are Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs). These practices depict those cultural traits having a defect on the lives, education, health and other aspects of an individual member of society.

Traditional practices are both of benefit and or harmful to the recipient of such challenging acts. In the rural African communities, there exist many strong oral traditions. Female genital mutilation, early marriage, child labour among others are directly affecting their educational achievement. This defect of traditional traits necessitated the creation of certain groups whose objectives are to fight for the rights of children and women who are mostly the victims of such acts. In Ethiopia for instance, there is an NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) known as NCTPE (National Committee on Traditional Practices), an affiliate of the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (Yu, R., *et al.*, 2014).

Under-aged are those young humans yet to attain the age of 15 years according to Hemson, D. (2007), citing ILO (International Labour Organisation) as also defined by Daly, A. (2016), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) considers 14 years and the United Nations (UN) approved 17 years (Bourdillon, M. (2006). The harmful traditional practices such as child labour truncate the educational achievement of young children. Therefore, under-aged are not lawfully allowed to be employed to work before their 18th birthday (Hobbs, S., *et al.*, 1999).

Some of the elements of tradition distorting the educational achievement of including female circumcision, denial to education through forced early marriage, female child rejection by their parents, hawking, under-aged labour and denial of women to possess the inheritance bequeathed by their husbands. In most parts of Northern Nigeria, parents show less interest in assisting their children at home. They believe that once their children are enrolled in school, they as parents have no role to play in the development of their children education, but only their teachers have the responsibility to assist. That is to say that in societies where parents are committed to assisting their children in the pursuit of their education, children tend to benefit greatly towards their educational achievement (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Hess & McDevitt, R.M., 1984).

Traditional Practices and Educational Achievement of Under-aged

The issue of traditional practices concerning the development of children attracted the attention of various scholars from all disciplines. Roberts, J., Donkin, A. and Marmot, M. (2016), argued that in Britain, young people and under-aged from the poorest background are most likely three times than their more advantaged counterparts to develop mental health challenges (Betancourt, 2005). The typology can be observed in different directions, with mentally ill children to be able to contribute to socio-economic among other health challenges (McCulloch and Goldie, 2010, Parckar, 2008). Those countries that are highly developed have a high level of inequality and therefore having higher rates of adolescent and under-aged health challenges (Pickett *et al.*, 2006).

Child education is affected by other traditional traits thereby making it impossible for children to achieve their educational goals. In this connection, Aptel, C. (2016) argued that child slavery is highly in existence across the globe in various forms such as children recruitment into hostile groups (child soldier), child trafficking sexual slavery, children in bonded labour, child victims of early forced marriages, among others.

Such traditional traits tend to leave the under-aged unprotected and sometimes they become victims of violence, child abuse and elements of threats (Aptel, 2016). Nigeria as a developing country and the cradle of the larger population of the 'Black Race' possesses a variety of natural and human resources. Unfortunately, the education system is being bedeviled with enormous challenges encompassing underfunding, including inadequate and poor infrastructure, insufficient classrooms, coupled with the lack of teaching aids like computers, laboratories, projectors, among others; lack of quality teachers and unconducive atmosphere of teaching and learning environment. Misdirected attention and political will of among the stakeholders of quality educational achievement of under-aged, brought about distortion in the education system due to certain social vices existing among students like cultism, examination malpractices, and infant hooliganism. Such negative practices in war-torn countries like Angola, Somalia, Libya and others like the child-soldier and cult groups existing in primary and secondary schools (Onuoha, G. 2011).

Early or Forced Marriage among Female Under-Aged

Walker, *et al.* (2012) believed that early/forced marriage as a cultural practice is detrimental to the life of the under-aged female child, the family and of course the society and its economy. She also argued that the under-aged is sent into marriage without achieving any educational attainment which is a common practice in northern Nigeria, Niger Republic, and Mali. This brings about domestic violence, a great number of births and series of changes in the life of the under-aged wife.

Data also indicated that the more we have a high percentage of under-aged wives in countries that are still undeveloped, the least their womenfolk is educated. For example, in the sub-Saharan African societies, under-aged of only 30 per cent of women from the age of 15 to 18 years were found to be educated before getting married. In Mali, Niger and Chad about 70 percent of the under-aged females were already married without literacy (Chevalier, A., *et al.*, 2013). The perception of the society of the under-aged female members of the individual communities as weaker-sex makes them more prone to unnecessary exploitation by human traffickers (Aronowitz, 2009). Their being trafficked by the groups of human vendors makes them incapable of acquiring education. Most parents due to negligence, illiteracy, lack of time and sometimes because of unwarranted attitude towards the educational achievement of their under-aged children fail to contribute sufficiently in such life-long pace-setting as a concrete foundation for the future of their children.

The entire responsibility of upbringing and all-round development of all children is basically supposed to be legally shouldered by parents, guardians, not to be left at the mercy of the community. However, since the under-aged have more time of their daily life to stay in the company of their parents than in school, parental involvement is expected to aggrandize the educational achievement of their under-aged (The United Nations, 1989).

Conger (2008), argued that where parental support, supportive siblings and a good network of familial relationships are not encouraged vital contributions to engineering among under-aged educational achievement are completely absent. This tends to drastically affect the educational achievement of the child. For example, in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria, because of the abject poverty, the ordinary families are immersed in, coupled with the lower level of parental literacy, under-aged hardly enjoy that monetary support from their parents. Despite the educational program of free education by the government, some parents cannot afford to sew new

uniforms for their schooling under-aged. They are also unable to assist the children in doing their homework due to illiteracy and or lack of time to be with their under-aged, nor ability to engage the services of private lesson teacher (Conger 2008)

Method

In this study qualitative approach was used while the interview was employed to garner data. A total number of 20 informants were interviewed by the researcher at their respective offices as follows: 2 Traditional stakeholders one of whom was Mai'unguwa (Ward-head), and one was a traditional title holder 'Madaki' (Commander of the Army in an Emirate) in the North-eastern region of Nigeria. 1 Legal practitioner and human rights advocate. 1 Health practitioner (an orthodox doctor) who talked about the psychological effects of the practices on the under-aged. 7 principals (4 females and 3 males) 5 headmasters (all were males).

Research Objectives

This study aimed to determine if women and under-aged are prohibited being educated by religion, and perceived potential solutions to religious impediments to the educational achievement of women and under-aged in North-eastern Nigeria.

The scope and Area of the Study

Northeastern part of Nigeria encompasses six states of Adamawa has 3,168,101, Bauchi State has 4,676,465. Borno state has 4,151,193 and Gombe, 2,353,879. Taraba with 2,300,736 population and Yobe state population is 2,321,591 total population figure of 18,971,965. The region has many ethnic groups such as Hausa, Kanuri, Fulani, Gerawa, Badawa, Jarawa, Zulawa and Karekare. Others are Kirfawa, Sayawa, Michika, Margi, Banana, among others, (Akinyele, 1996; Mofoke, Adewumi, Babatunde, Mudiare&Ramalan, 2006; Osaghae, 2006).

Data Collection and Medium of Analysis

Semi-structural interviews were conducted at different locations in the North-eastern region of Nigeria, based on a non-probability sampling approach. There were 20 informants used as interviewees. They were purposefully selected from different primary, secondary schools, traditional leaders, headmasters, legal practitioner, medical doctor, academics, directors and ward-head. The data collection was undertaken between June 8th and August 10th, 2015. Nvivo 10 software was used in the thematic data analysis.

Findings

Based on the research objective of this study, the informants were questioned to obtain their individual perceptions about whether women and under-aged are prohibited being educated by religion, and also their perceptions about the potential solutions to the religious impediment to the education of women and under-aged in the North-east geo-political zone. In accordance with the literature reviewed for the purpose of this study and the established gaps pointing to the fact that each of the informants should extensively speak on the matter holistically. The proper understanding and analyzing of religion and educational achievement and the root causes of their defective association in the lives of under-aged and women. This will be able to provide an analysis which can bring out suggestions from the informants' reactions certain solutions to the problem. Similarly, the data analysis of this study revealed that religious ignorance, illiteracy among parents are the two main reasons why parents do not support the education of their children, especially the female under-aged, and the refusal to allow the continuity of the educational pursuit of female students after marriage.

In many cultures, the most common perception is that the underage female's education is never valued by the parents. They believe that an attempt to educate the female child is tantamount to disrespect due to the rampant incidence of unwanted pregnancy among in-school girls (Alabi, 2014). They also believe that most of the educated female members of their communities do not get married early or not even marry at all due to exposure to western education. And even if they do get married, they end up marrying from outside their localities. They are rather sent into getting married earlier so as to protect them from losing their virginity outside wedlock (Alabi, 2014; Aderinto, 2000; Fisho-Orideji, 2001; Schmitz- Robinson, 2006).

Value of Female Education among Parents

An under-aged is born hopeless and solely relies on parents and other elders in their immediate respective communities and larger society. This interaction makes them survive and satisfactorily grow up in all ramifications (Alabi, *et al.* 2014). Therefore, the quality of their life and societal participation in society are dependent on the level of their educational achievement.

Their performance in terms of citizenship and entitlement of their fundamental human rights become more effective as a result of the quality of their educational background. This indicates the social and political responsibilities preceding generations bequeath their heirs (Ocho, 1988; Offorma 2009; Asare, 2009). But unfortunately, in most of the third world countries, many parents do not encourage the education of their female underage. In contrast, those who engendered educational achievement without inclining to a tradition of being gender biased encourage their female children alongside their male counterparts to acquire an education (Kilbourne, *et al.*, 1994).

Informant HM19 claimed that “Many of the young girls given out in marriage are married without any courtship with the elderly man forced on her by her father. Therefore, their action is forcing disaffection between here and the husband.” An under-aged female in most cases is forced get married to an old man of 50 or 60 years of age by her parents. As a result of this union, the under-aged female becomes aggressive towards the husband which results to divorce after she becomes pregnant. Early marriage has been a major cause of rampant cases of maternal death among girl-mothers in Nigeria (Schmitz-Robinson 2006).



Figure 1. Value of female education among parents

Religious Ignorance

One of the major issues distorting education of female under-aged in Nigeria is the religious misconception attached to early/forced marriage. As argued by Aderinto (2000) and Fisho-Orideji (2001), that a female under-aged of less than 12 years of age is in most cases, given out in marriage to a certain individual in the interests of her parents. These individuals could be benefactors, friends of their fathers, visitors, heroes or clerics and strangers, among others.

At least 30% of female under-aged in the developing countries are given out in marriage before their 18th birthday. Again, about 14% of them marry before the age of 15 years. Therefore, child marriage barricades female under-aged from acquiring education (Nordtveit, B. H., 2016). In connection to this, those girl-children given out in marriage are not encouraged to continue their education. Informant TL16 noted that:

Many divorcees are seen in our streets with their children roaming about in search of what to eat. Their children cannot go to school, because the mother does not have any means of shouldering the responsibility of their education. Such mothers are only struggling to feed themselves and the children. (Informant TL16).

To this effect, another scholar saw it the same way with the preceding informant when he claimed that after they (young mothers) are expelled from their matrimonial homes with their babies, without any place to put up, hence their abandonment by their parents. They tend to abandon their new-born babies under bridge, uncompleted building, especially if the babies are females immediately they are delivered. Many parents also believe that to avoid shame to the family from pregnancy outside wedlock (Aderinto, et al., 2000).

Informant P18 insisted that “most parents misconceive doctrines by thinking that their female children must be sent to their husbands’ houses in their early age. Their tradition is given much priority against the interest of the future of their female children.” However, Fisho-Orideji (2001) in relation to the forgone statement also claimed that “those parents perceive early marriage as the only way to preserve traditions and avoid shame for their families. Informant FD15 informed that,

Their education is used to delay early marriage until the girl is mature, but if the marriage must take place, because of the belief among parents that certain girls can go out of religious and cultural moral traits, they should be allowed to continue their schooling even after marriage. (Informant FD15)

Informant CI4 in line with the perspective of the preceding scholar argued that “there is no doctrine in Islam that prohibits education of female child”...He further mentioned that “Islam encourages the education of both male and female members of society”

The child rights act of 2003, section 15 should be upheld bythe legal system, to compel parents to send their wards to school for a brighter future. This section states the rights of the child irrespective of gender differences under the Universal Primary Education (Informant CI4).

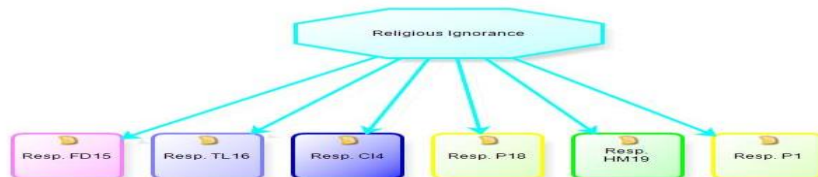


Figure 2. Religious ignorance

Psychological Consequences of Non-enrolling Under-aged in Education

With sufficient education, female under-aged is informed on health and nation related issues. She is also educated on a better way of bringing up her offspring and to also make cogent personal decisions to benefit her

in future. She can also be opportune to protect herself from the menace of sexual exploitation, human trafficking, sexually transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDS) and other health and social challenges (Ogundipe 2007; Offorma, 2009). Informant Resp.MD12 posited that:

Lack of education among female children exposes them to the risk of falling victim of psychological trauma. They live to observe and painfully regret how their friends who attend school are opportune to be educated which makes them feel dejected and in most cases become aggressive in the midst of their peers. (Informant Resp.MD12).

Early marriage without enough education leads to physical and psychological challenges tantamount to unequal relationships. Young females are in most cases less likely to be educated about the idea of family planning and thereby resulting in high rate of deaths among them due to early pregnancy. Those victims of such leading causal factor of death are the married under-aged between the ages of 15 and 19 years (Bakibinga, 2015).

In 2015, Bakibinga and associates in their study “The Influence of Religion and Ethnicity on Family Planning Approval” the findings showed that there was an insignificant impact of ethnicity and religion on family planning approval. However, the major factors having more significance on family planning and approval were the level of education and knowledge about the positive effect of family planning on the lives of the mothers (Bakibinga, P., et. al. 2015). Informant Resp.MD12 added that:

There are certain risks attached to non-marriage at a tender age of 12-15 among parents such as unwanted pregnancy, social stigma, and rape. But some parents do such a thing in their personal interests to extort money from the rich men in an exchange with their female children due to poverty. (Informant Resp.MD12)

Another medical implication as an example, in relation to the foregone assertion, is the environmental-dependent factor which is contracted at birth known as obstetric fistula. Obstetric fistula brings about physical and societal consequences. In certain societies, for instance, married female under-aged are mostly infected with STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases), especially HIV. It is arguable that the major role played by education is the preventive guard it offers to against early marriage, while it also decreases the rate of its negative consequences (Nordtveit, B. H., 2016).

In some communities of Lesotho and Swaziland, there exists a traditional trait which holds the view that the best cure for HIV/AIDS infection among men is having sex with a virgin. This bad omen induced psychological results in the lives of the victims (Chabaya, et al., 2011). Certain practices and language “bring about more experiences of victimization, high rates of dropout, teenage pregnancies as a result of which worsen the level of vulnerability of young female members of society whom critics of sex education, school-based health centers, claim protecting.” Again, Fine, M. (1988) was of the view that the anti-sex-education and school-based health centers do not much in enhancing the development of sexual subjectivity and responsibility among young people. Despite sufficient facts on the success of access to information on sexuality and school based health centers, a great number of public institutions of learning do not offer such information. This lack of information results suffering among those female students, especially from lower income background (Fine, M. 1988).

A medical personnel, informant Resp.MD12 specialist at a hospital further emphasised that “The government needs to create an awareness campaign on the issue of sending all children to an institution of learning. The schools must be established within the vicinity of rural areas to allow for attendance by the children.”

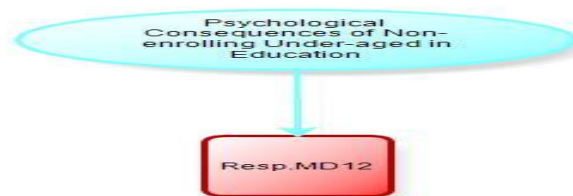


Figure 3. Psychological consequences of non-enrolling under-aged in education

Illiteracy among Parents

United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF 2003) is one of the bodies investing in the cause of female under-aged education to enable children at the global level to acquire education no matter their family's economic background across the globe. Informant Resp.CI4 “emphatically stated that “parents should be punished accordingly if found guilty of violating the regulations as enshrined in the objectives of the UN in the bid to protect the fundamental rights of children.”

According to Igube (2004), some traditions also make women and children perpetual dependent on their husbands for every of their needs and wants. Culturally too, in Nigeria, certain cultures perceive the position of woman is in the kitchen at their matrimonial homes and also have the major function of child bearing. Informant Resp.P9

An educated female under-aged is reckoned more conscious of her rights with the propensity to assert them. A female under-aged is prepared to be economically productive and independent. She is also made to be relevant in terms of leadership. Birungi 2008 and Offorma 2008 argued further that without basically educating the female under-aged there will be a lack of significant and sustainable national development and poverty reduction in the nation. Informant Resp.HM3



Figure 4. Illiteracy among parents

Roles of Religious and Traditional Leaders

Culturally, in South Africa womenfolk is highly segregated in the aspect of social roles in all communities. The immortalization of women’s second-class status is legalized among cultures which encourage continued gender oppression. For example, in some communities of Lesotho and Swaziland, there exists a traditional trait which holds the view that the best cure for HIV/AIDS infection among men is having sex with a virgin. This bad omen induced psychological results in the lives of the victims (Paul, M., et al., 2014).

Resp.TL16, an informant was also quoted claiming “a great number of parents have formed the habit of withdrawing their female children from school for marriage.” In the same vein, Informant CI4 was of the view that,

Child right of acquiring education, irrespective of gender divide should go in line with the childrights of 2003, section 15 must be respected by the government from all tiers of government. Therefore, all parents should allow their children to get educated; while parents who default the law should be punished. (Informant CI4)



Figure 5. Roles of religious and traditional leaders

Need for Parents to Value Education

The report by UNICEF (2003) that the number of female under-aged in Sub-Saharan Africa not yet enrolled in school annually, is on the increase in 1990 it was 20 million; while it increased up to 24 million in 2002. Again, their population rose to more than 26 million in 2009 as claimed by (Offorma 2009). Informant Resp.WH2“Government should give more priority to education of young children to enable Nigeria to have a set of more engendered and enlightened future leaders”. Therefore, from the text and the responses of the informants, it is apparent that the alarming figures of female children not yet enrolled in the pursuit for education, is attracting a very serious attention at the global parameters.

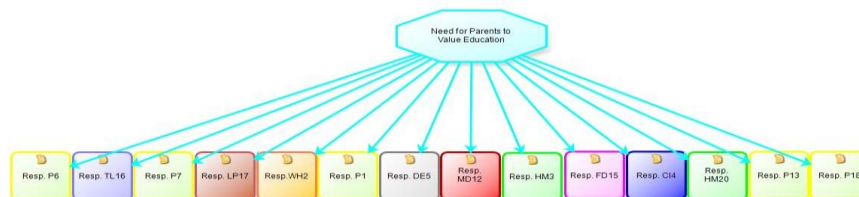


Figure 6. Need for parents to value education

Need for Government Support

Informant Resp.P7 believes that “if the government takes the responsibility of acquiring uniforms for primary and secondary, especially the female pupils/students, their educational achievement would rise higher than it is

now.” Women and children face numerous challenges within their individual households, in their quest to earn a living in poverty stricken society. Within the multi-faceted economy of every society, most, especially in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, poverty among women, are on the rise, even though they greatly contribute in considerable proportion against environmental damage (Serageldin, 1989). Informant Resp.LP17 however, postulated that,

The desirable measure to take is to identify those gray areas in enhancing women’s status in society. These include provision for more emphasis on scholarships for female members of society, especially those in a higher level of education. The children should be fed and fully accommodated in the school. (Informant Resp.LP17).

In relation to the preceding informant, Kuppen, *et al.* (2016) asserted that adequate funding is needed to provide accommodation facilities in all public schools, in order to encourage parents to send their female children to school, especially in the grassroots. They should also be given an opportunity to occupy certain political and professional positions; more so, not only a few sectors of the population should be educated, but be allowed to spread across the society Kuppen, *et al.* (2016). Informant Resp.DE5 argued that “without government interventions in transforming the economic condition of women in society, children will continue to drop out of school due to poverty. Fathers do not have the economic capacity to shoulder the responsibilities of their large families.” Informant Resp.CI4 in similar vein:

Female children should be offered the same opportunity with their male counterparts to enable them to participate in societal development. There is no limit age for knowledge seek among people, irrespective of their economic and gender differences...in recent time, a woman of old age in Kenya became the oldest primary school pupil to remedy how she was denied education during her childhood (Informant Resp.CI4)

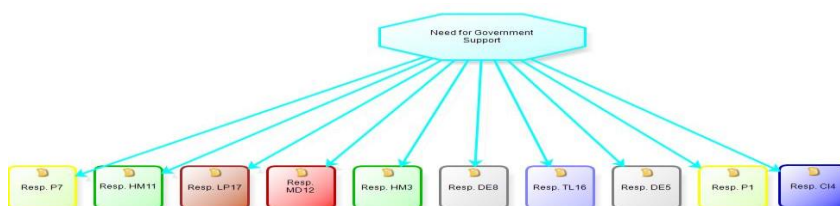


Figure 7. Need for government support

Need for Married Female Students to Continue Schooling

In view of their individual perceptions on the issue of the continuation of the educational pursuit of young married women scholars and some of the informants in this study expressed different views on reasons why their education is truncated. Due to extreme poverty, in the developing countries of the world, under-aged faces the challenges involving maltreatment in society during social mishap as a result of economic crises. However, few of the under-aged in certain societies reject conflicts in their immediate environment (Bourdilon, 2012). Informant Resp.VC10 believed that “disallowing the married women to go to school is detrimental to the entire society and not their immediate locality”

Seek for education is fundamentally necessary for all Muslims, irrespective of the gender divide. This is in consonance with the philosophy of Islam. Islam instructs all adherents to acquire and disseminate knowledge as an obligation to humanity. Education in Islam is aimed at producing descent and talented human being, so as to have them deliver their duties in their position as earthly Khalifah (vicegerent). The more women are exposed to education, the higher the propensity of them to occupy positions in different companies and other lucrative organisations. This shows that womenfolk are increasingly qualifying and occupying many positions which were previously in most cases being occupied by menfolk (Islam, M. 2016). Informant Resp.HM3 noted that, *Under-aged and women are the sufferer of most of the problems in the society, because, in the times of war and other unfortunate situations, they are the victims of other people’s actions. The fact that they are denied education, the only way out for the future of the society is to get them educated.* (Informant Resp.HM3)

Informant Resp.DE8 argued that “many children are not allowed by their parents to attend school because they want them to perform certain petty trades on our streets for them to provide them with food in the house.” The female under-aged faces the problem of child labour in various households in Nigeria. Child labour is fast prevailing across the world, especially in the developing countries (Togunde& Carter 2008). In both Africa and Asia, there is about 85% of the world’s total child employment (UNICEF 2004). Informant CI4 in connection to the above argument stated that,

There is no religious teaching kicking against the education of any member of society based on their gender difference. In fact, if a female child is educated, an entire society is build, hence her position as the first teacher of all her children. Therefore, allowing

her to go to school is very important (Informant CI4)

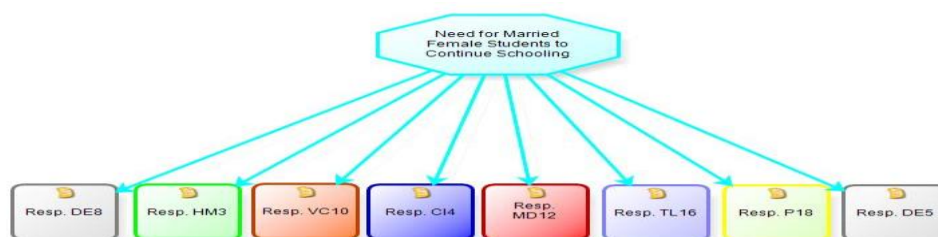


Figure 8. Need for married female students to continue schooling

Results

The researcher wanted to inquire if women are prohibited being educated by religion; second, the interviewees' opinion on religious ignorance among parents who deny education of their children and; the possible solution to the problem of religious ignorance on the educational achievement of women and children in Bauchi metropolis. The result indicates that most parents do not value the education of their children. Their denial to education transforms them into illiterate adults without future. In order to proffer a solution, the findings indicate that parents supposed to value education in its entirety; government support is highly needed, and also need for married female students to continue their educational pursuit. The study suggests that future research should include the views of the children out of school and women whose education pursuit was truncated as a result of getting married without continuing the education of the young wife.

II. DISCUSSION

The first objective of this study was to determine "if women and under-aged are prohibited being educated by religion; while the second was to determine the perceived potential solutions to religious impediments to the educational achievement of women and under-aged in North-eastern Nigeria". This study's findings suggest that religion does not prohibit women and under-aged education. The causes of educational impediment among women and under-aged are: Illiteracy among parents, Religious ignorance and lack of Value for female education among parents, Psychological consequences of non-enrolling under-aged in education; the revelations are expected to be a yardstick to apply towards addressing the low educational achievement of women and under-aged in Nigeria. For the reason of inaction from the side of the stakeholders of beliefs in society and government in particular, due to lack of political will to reinvigorate the educational achievement of under-aged and women. The findings also indicated that Suggested solutions such as Need for married female students to continue schooling, Need for government support, Need for parents to value education and Roles of religious and traditional leaders if applied in Nigeria will tackle the challenges of low educational achievement of women and under-aged.

III. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine if women and under-aged are prohibited being educated by religion and perceived potential solutions to religious impediments to the educational achievement of women and under-aged in North-eastern Nigeria. Majorly, Illiteracy among parents, though together with others like religious ignorance and the refusal of parents to value the education of their children. At this point, it can be concluded that the major activity of illiteracy, not prohibition by religion has great influence on the educational achievement of under-aged and women in the Northeastern Nigeria. Moreover, failure of the stakeholders such as religious leaders to do the needful; and government to have determination towards using its political will in protecting the educational rights of women and children in Nigeria plays a great role in the lower educational achievement among the people in question. There are Psychological consequences of non-enrolling under-aged in the education. There is the need for the government to support the education of women and under-aged; the need for the parents to value the education of their children; and the need for the married under-aged to continue schooling even after marriage.

The fact that what are mostly perceived as impeding educational achievement were basically seen as hinged on poverty among parents in most cases, in this study it has become undoubtedly having a lot to do with religious or belief misconception which causes lack of value for education among parents. Moreover, the government has a lot to do to improve the level of educational achievement of children and women in society. Again, education by implication is the bedrock of every society and therefore, the under-aged and women have their fundamental right to be educated so that the earlier their lives are transformed, the better for their community and the larger society. Without being educated, female under-aged and her counterparts are denied the ample opportunity to fully develop potentially productive within the family unit and their society, even at international level.

Finally, rural schools in Africa are highly deteriorated compared to those in the urban areas. Those female under-aged lucky to have been enrolled in school do not have access to the required quality education due to certain traditions that see her out of school. In Nigeria for example, just like in most parts of Africa, many children in schools, especially public institutions are rather a replica of destitute; crowded classes and substandard structures; many of them have limited access to books and other writing materials that are supposed to be supplied to them by the government. Besides, computers are not provided, even where they are provided by civic organisations or certain business firms, they are not fully utilised due to lack of sufficient power supply. Certain cultural traits and traditions constitute an obstacle to the education of female under-aged in Nigeria, despite the much efforts put in to change the situation. Child labour and denial of women education after marriage are two major huddles hindering their educational pursuits. Therefore, some bylaws should be formulated in order to change the trend in Nigeria and Africa at large. The basic education at a primary and secondary level should be mandatory for all children; while adult education should also be given adequate attention to enable those adults who did not have the opportunity of being educated have a chance to be literate. This can only be achieved if there are good governance and decrease in corruption among government officials and other sectors, alongside political will at all levels of government- local, state and central administration.

Further Study

Further research should include the opinions of the perceived victims of religious misconception such as women (who suffer a great deal due to truncation of their education after marriage), and under-aged whose education is truncated as a result of their involvement in child labour and or early marriage.

Recommendations

In order to enhance female under-aged education in Nigeria, there should be an all-round approach from the family unit to the larger society. In South Africa for example, there had been a review of their curriculum meant to be used as a responsive tool to enable them to achieve their national demand in the post-apartheid era. The curriculum was developed to the status of child-centred as against teacher centered method. However, in Kenya, the child right to education has been enshrined to promote children's education in the Children's Act of 2001. The Kenyan Children's Act also established a department for children to enjoy their rights and welfare adequately.

Free feeding for the children during school hours should be adequately undertaken. This is due to the fact that in Bangladesh, it was successful which brought about a high level of educational dividends. There was a result of 35% increase in children's involvement in education; while the female under-aged enrolment in education increased to 44% (Offorma, G. C. (2009). In view of this development, it is recommendable that all tiers of government- primary, secondary and central administrations in Nigeria should emulate the Bangladesh's experience in order to attain Universal Basic Education. It should be programmed to be extended to rural areas, not to be confined to the urban areas.

Adult education centresshould be well equipped with modern learning facilities such as computers, and conducive atmosphere in terms of feeding during school hours and structures in order to allow for their full participation in education pursuit. However, the schools should be free and rather make them enjoy a certain monthly package to alleviate their poverty.

There should be an immediate formulation of bylaws to protect the education of both married female students and under-aged with a very severe punishment on the defaulting parents and husbands, who might have violated an earlier agreement between them and the family of their spouses concerning continuation of their education after marriage. This could be achieved through the use of NGOs and other governmental bodies, religious and the traditional leaders. However, out of school children should also be reinstated; while those who are into apprenticeships should be guided and be given certain incentives to establish their independent businesses in order to encourage creativity among younger generations in the society.

REFERENCES

- [1] Aderinto, A. A. (2000). Social correlates and coping measures of street-children: a comparative study of street and non-street children in south-western Nigeria. *Child abuse & neglect*, 24(9), 1199-1213.
- [2] Akinyele, 1996; Mofoke, Adewumi, Babatunde, Mudiare&Ramalan, 2006).
- [3] Alabi T., Bahah M. and Alabi S.O. (2014). The girl-child: a sociological view on the problems of girl-child education in Nigeria
- [4] Aptel, C. (2016). Child Slaves and Child Brides. *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, mqv078.
- [5] Aronowitz, A. A. (2009). *Human trafficking, human misery: The global trade in human beings*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- [6] Bakibinga, P., Mutombo, N., Mutombo, N., Mukiira, C., Kamande, E., Ezech, A. and Muga R., (2015). The Influence of Religion and Ethnicity on Family Planning Approval: A Case for Women in Rural Western Kenya.
- [7] Bellamy, C. (1999). *The state of the world's children 1999*.

- [8] Betancourt, J. R., Green, A. R., Carrillo, J. E., & Park, E. R. (2005). Cultural competence and health care disparities: key perspectives and trends. *Health affairs*, 24(2), 499-505.
- [9] Biddlecom, A., Awusabo-Asare, K., & Bankole, A. (2009). Role of parents in adolescent sexual activity and contraceptive use in four African countries. *International perspectives on sexual and reproductive health*, 72-81.
- [10] Bourdillon, M. (2006). Children and work: A review of current literature and bates. *Development and Change*, 37(6), 1201-1226.
- [11] Bourdillon, M. F. & Spittler, G. (2012). *African children at work: Working and learning in growing up for life* (Vol. 52). LIT VerlagMünster.
- [12] Brabo, T. A. M., de Castro, R. M., & Miguel, J. C. (2015). Work, the Brazilian Women, and the Teaching Profession: Some Notes. *Creative Education*, 6 (17), 1883.
- [13] Chevalier, A., Harmon, C., O'Sullivan, V., & Walker, I. (2013). The impact of parental income and education on the schooling of their children. *IZA Journal of Labor Economics*, 2(1), 1-22.
- [14] Conger, R. D. Neppel, T. K., Ontai, L. L., & Scaramella, L. V. (2008). Consequences of socioeconomic disadvantage across three generations: parenting behavior and child externalizing. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22(5), 725.
- [15] Convention on the Rights of the Child - ohchr **Nations** have, in the Charter, Recognizing that the **United Nations** has, in the Universal Declaration of ratification and accession by
- [16] General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 ... Bearing in mind that the peoples of the **United** <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>...
- [17] Daly, A. (2016). *A Commentary on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*,
- [18] *Article 15: The Right to Freedom of Association and to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly*. Brill.
- [19] DESIMONE, L.; Hess & McDevitt, R.M., (1984). Do Race and Income Matter?
- [20] Eccles, J., & Harold, R. (1993). Parent-school involvement during the early adolescent years. *The Teachers College Record*, 94(3), 568-587.
- [21] Fine, M. (1988). Sexuality, schooling, and adolescent females: The missing discourse of desire. *Harvard educational review*, 58(1), 29-54.
- [22] Fisho-Orideji, 2001; Alabi, T., Bahah, M., & Alabi, S. O. (2014). The girl-child: A sociological view on the problems of girl-child education in Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, 10(2).
- [23] Forness, S. R., Freeman, S. F., Paparella, T., Kauffman, J. M., & Walker, H. M. (2012). Special
- [24] education implications of point and cumulative prevalence for children with emotional or behavioral disorders. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 20(1), 4-18.
- [25] Hemson, D. (2007). 'The toughest of chores': policy and practice in children collecting water in South Africa. *Policy futures in education*, 5(3), 315-326.
- [26] Hess, R. D., & McDevitt, T. M. (1984). Some cognitive consequences of maternal intervention techniques: A longitudinal study. *Child Development*, 2017-2030.
- [27] Hobbs, S. & McKechnie, J. (1999). Child labour the view from the North. *Childhood*, 6(1), 89-100.
- [28] Ibrahim, F., Ohnishi, H., & Sandhu, D. S. (1997). Asian American identity development: A
- [29] culture specific model for South Asian Americans. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 25(1), 34-50.
- [30] Igube, R.B. (2004), Gender Security and Advancement: the Case of Inequality and Inequity.
- [31] Paper Presented at the Round Table Discourse by Higher Link Educational Programme,
- [32] The British Council, Change Managers International, University of Abuja, Abuja 8th March, 2004.
- [33] Islam, M. (2016) Importance of Girls' Education as Right: A Legal Study from Islamic Approach. *Beijing Law Review*, 7, 1-11. doi: 10.4236/blr.2016.71001.
- [34] Khan, Z. R. (2014). Achieving food security for one million sub-Saharan African poor through push-pull innovation by 2020. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences*, 369(1639), 20120284.
- [35] Kilbourne, B. S., England, P., Farkas, G., Beron, K., & Weir, D. (1994). Returns to skill,
- [36] compensating differentials, and gender bias: Effects of occupational characteristics on the wages of white women and men. *American Journal of Sociology*, 689-719.
- [37] Kloos, H. & Mariam, D. H. (2000). HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia: An Overview. *Northeast African*
- [38] *Studies* 7(1), 13-40. Michigan State University Press. Retrieved May 9, 2016, from Project MUSE database.
- [39] Kolawole, M.M., (1998) Womenism and African consciousness. Trenton: African World Press
- [40] Kuppen, S. E., & Goswami, U. (2016). Developmental trajectories for children with dyslexia and low IQ poor readers. *Developmental Psychology*, 52(5), 717.
- [41] McCulloch, A. (2010). Introduction In: I Goldie (Ed) Public Mental Health Today. *Brighton: Pavilion Publishing Ltd*.

- [42] Mofoke, A. L. E., Adewumi, J. K., Babatunde, F. E., Mudiare, O. J., & Ramalan, A. A. (2006).
- [43] Yield of tomato grown under continuous-flow drip irrigation in Bauchi state of Nigeria. *agricultural water management*, 84(1), 166-172.
- [44] Nordtveit, B. H. (2016). Child marriage Ocho, L.O. (1988). *The Philosophy of Education for Nigeria*. Enugu: Harris Printing & Publishing. Offorma, G.C. (2009). *The Girl-child-education in Africa. Keynot Address* Presented at the
- [45] Conference of the University WOMENNE of Africa Held in Lagos on 16th-19th July.
- [46] Ogundipe, M., (2007) Indigenous and Contemporary Gender Concept and Issues in African: Implication for Nigeria's Development. CBAAC Occasional Monograph No. 2 Mathouse Press Limited.
- [47] Onuoha, G. (2011). Contesting the Space: The "New Biafra" and Ethno-Territorial Separatism in South-Eastern Nigeria. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 17(4), 402-422.
- [48] Osaghae, E. (2006). Federalism and Political Accommodation: The Nigerian Experience in
- [49] Comparative Perspective. *Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research Distinguish Lecture Series*.
- [50] Parckar, G. (2008). Disability Poverty in the UK. *Londres: Leonard Cheshire Disability*. Paul, M., Chiome, C., Alexander, C. R., & Owence, C. (2014). Through the Lenses of the
- [51] Alumni: Enhancing Quality in the Zimbabwe Open University. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(11), 167.
- [52] Pickett, J. A., Midega, C. A., Pittchar, J. O., Murage, A. W., Birkett, M. A., Bruce, T. J., & Roberts, J., Donkin, A., & Marmot, M. (2016). Opportunities for reducing socioeconomic
- [53] inequalities in the mental health of children and young people—reducing adversity and increasing resilience. *Journal of Public Mental Health*, 15(1), 4-18.
- [54] Schmitz-Robinson, E. (2006). The right to education and the girl child. *Girls' Situations*. Schmitz, M. F., Arlt, J., & McCloskey, M. S., Eichen, D. M., Chen, E. Y., (2016). Addiction
- [55] vulnerability and binge eating in women: Exploring reward sensitivity, affect regulation, impulsivity & weight/shape concerns. *Personality and Individual Differences*.
- [56] Serageldin, I. (1989). *Poverty, adjustment, and growth in Africa*. B. Mundial (Ed.). Washington DC: World Bank.
- [57] Spadacini, B. and Nichols, P. (2014). HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia: An Overview. *Northeast African*
- [58] *Studies* 7(1), 13-40. Michigan State University Press. Retrieved May 9, 2016, from Project MUSE database.
- [59] Togunde, D., & Carter, A. (2008). In their own words: Consequences of child labour in urban Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 16(2), 173-181.
- [60] Unicef. THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN 2003. Carol Bellamy. Executive irector.
- [61] Unicef. (2004). New York: UNICEF; 2004. *Children on the Brink*. United Nations Children's Fund. With photos and artwork by children
- [62] United Nations Centre for Human Rights. (1989). *Right to adequate food as a human right* (No. 1). New York: United Nations.