



An investigation on factors preventing girl-child from further education in rural areas in Federal Capital Territory Abuja

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Received: 2 August 2021

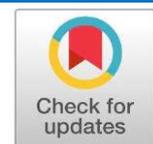
Accepted: 19 September 2021

Published: 30 September 2021

Abstract: This paper investigates the factors preventing girl-child from further education in rural areas of Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The targeted population was all public primary school teachers in rural areas across the six area councils of Abuja Federal Capital Territory. The sample of the study consisted of 300 primary school teachers in thirty public primary schools. The study used simple random sampling, proportionate stratified random sampling, and purposive sampling techniques. Through a simple random sampling method, 300 teachers were selected from 30 public primary schools across the six area councils of FCT. The instrument used for data collection was a 15 item structured questionnaire tagged “An Investigation on the Factors Preventing Girl-Child from Further Education Questionnaire” (AIGCPPEEQ). The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert method of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. A re-test method with an interval of two weeks was followed to test the reliability of the instrument. The scores obtained were correlated using Pearson’s Product Moment co-efficient. An acceptable coefficient of $r=0.86$ was obtained, thereby indicating that the instrument was adequate for the study. Additionally, a Cronbach alpha value of $r=0.88$ was recorded for the instrument indicating its acceptable internal consistency. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions. The mean cut-off point was 2.5. All items with mean of 2.50 were regarded as agreement and accepted while those less than 2.50 were regarded as disagreement and were accordingly rejected. It concludes that economic, culture, early marriage, religion, distance, inadequate infrastructural facilities, insecurity, poor implementation of Girl-Child right bill, poor funding of Girl Child education and corruption are the factors preventing Girl-child from further education in rural areas in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Keywords: Education, girl-child, rural areas, poverty.

How to cite: Jacob, O.N. & Ndubuisi, A.G. (2021). An investigation on factors preventing girl-child from further education in rural areas in Federal Capital Territory Abuja. *Journal of Science and Education (JSE)*, 2(1): 30-38. <https://doi.org/10.56003/jse.v2i1.52>



INTRODUCTION

Nigeria’s out-of-school population is the largest in the world and it is continuously growing. Of the staggering 10.5 million out-of-school children in Nigeria today, majority are girls. Girls from the poorest families in rural areas of the Northwest and Northeast regions are among the most risk of never attending school (British Council 2012). The number of children out-of-school in Nigeria grew by 42% between 1999 and 2010 (UNESCO, 2014). Rural residence exacerbates regional disparities in enrolment. Three times primary school age children who are out of school live in rural areas compared to urban areas (36% compared to 12%). Ten times children and adolescents of primary or junior secondary school age are out of school in the Northeast and Northwest compared to regions of the South. Girls living in rural areas in Northern states are among the least likely to ever attend school.



Data revealed very little progress in universal access to primary schooling in the last decade. In fact, Nigeria is one of a handful of countries far from that target with slow progress to date. Gender disparities in access to basic education are compounded by interrelated regional, wealth and residence inequalities in access and completion. The situation is not different in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Many children especially girls do not further education after basic education due to many reasons in rural areas in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

The objective of this study is to investigate the causal factors preventing girl-child from further education in rural area of Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The following research questions were formulated to guide the study, what are causal factors preventing girl-child from further education in rural area of Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria?

The high rate of withdrawal from school amongst girl child in Nigeria is high especially in the rural areas. Withdrawal from school at early age is a significant issue among girls. 12% of girls compared to 10% of boys withdraw from primary school in primary early, before completion of primary 6. Out of the girls who withdrew, the majority live in rural areas and in the Northeast or Northwest regions ([Macro & National Population Commission, 2009](#)). Based on this problem, this study aims at investigating the factors preventing girl-child from further education in rural area of Federal capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

There are many investigations on Girl child education. [Jacob, Lawan, & Yusuf \(2021\)](#) did a study on perception of female students on the challenges women education is facing in the universities in Nigeria. The study discovered that inadequate funding of public universities, inadequate ICT facilities, inadequate female hotels, classrooms, poor implementation of policies protecting female students from sexual harassment, inadequate female lecturers and strike actions and poverty, cultural factor, early marriage, fear of insecurity, high cost of university education are factors preventing women education in the Nigerian universities.

The [British Council \(2012\)](#) reported that the ratio of girls to boys in all levels of education always showed that fewer girls than boys in term of enrolment. The report acknowledged that the majorities of out of school children are girls in Nigeria. [Jacob \(2020\)](#) did a study that Investigate Challenges hindering Girl child from going to school UBE in Gwagwalad area council of FCT. The study found out that cultural factor, economic factor, poverty, early marriage, poor implementation of girl child policies, inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, and shortage of instructional materials were identified as the supply and demand side factors preventing the girl child from going to UBE in Gwagwalada area council of FCT.

[Mark \(2018\)](#) did research on factor hindering girl child education at senior secondary school in Nigeria and disclosed that early marriage, poverty, cultural factor, religious factor, and insecurity are the major problems affecting the girl child education at the senior secondary schools in Nigeria. The [World-Bank \(2017\)](#) concluded that the supply and demand factors affecting girl child education include at the demand factor, household poverty and indirect cost. A study by Angela (2011) who cited [Ejembi \(1994\)](#) discovered that 77.8% of women in Africa got married before 15years of age. [Unterhalter & Heslop \(2011\)](#) did a survey

in six Northern states in Nigeria in 2008 and concluded that 43% of the sample respondents agreed that early marriage was a major problem preventing girl child from furthering their education while 32% cited pregnancy as the inhibiting factor. [Jacob \(2020\)](#) cited Abdulkarim, (2009) who did a study in Gombe and Adamawa States and found out that, 60% of girls' withdrawals from primary school were linked to early marriages, which parents considered a religious obligation. [Bello & Oluwadare \(2013\)](#) established in their study that there is a disparity between male and female enrolment in the Nigerian school system. The study concluded that female is seen as weaker gender in all endeavor. Parents and society see the female gender as inferior intellectually, physically, and otherwise to male counterparts. The study also showed that wide gap exists in the study of science programmes. [Jacob \(2020\)](#) cited King and Hill (1993) who noted that gender-biased tradition, poverty, early marriage, religion subordinate roles of women, early marriage and parental attitude account for disparity in education to the disadvantage of women.

METHOD

The study employed descriptive survey research design for the study. The population of the study include all teachers at public primary schools in rural areas across the six area councils of Federal capital Territory, Abuja. The study sampled 300 primary school teachers in thirty public primary schools in F.C.T. Out of which, 180 are male and 120 females. The study used simple random sampling, proportionate stratified random sampling, and purposive sampling techniques. Purposive sampling technique was used because the respondents selected have knowledge of the research topic and they must be met privately in their various offices. Questionnaire was adopted for data collection. The questionnaire was "An Investigation on the Factors Preventing Girl-Child from Further Education Questionnaire" (AIGCPPEEQ). The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert method of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. It had 3 sections. Section "A" contains demographic questions, section "B" the points 4, 3, 2 and 1 were assigned to each scale respectively in the questionnaire. To ensure the validity of the research instrument, two experts in the faculty of education, University of Abuja to validate the instrument. Their constructive criticisms and opinions led to the restructuring of some items of the questionnaire which helped to strengthen the face and content. Its reliability was determined by administering the instrument to 50 public primary schools' teachers in Kogi state Lokoja for trial test. A re-test method with an interval of two weeks was followed to test the reliability of the instrument. The scores obtained were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment coefficient. An acceptable coefficient of $r=0.86$ was obtained indicating that the instrument was adequate for the study. Additionally, a Cronbach alpha value of $r=0.88$ was recorded for the instrument indicating its acceptable internal consistency. The data were analyzed using percentage, mean and standard deviation for the research questions. Mean cut-off point was 2.5. All items with mean of 2.50 were regarded as agreement and acceptance while those less than 2.50 were regarded as disagreement and were accordingly rejected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Research Question 1: Is poverty a preventing factor on Girl-Child further education in rural areas of FCT?

Table 1. Economic Problems

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Poverty is a factor preventing Girl-Child from further education in FCT	220	71	6	3	3.84	Agree

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D; Disagree.

Result of table one revealed that the total mean score obtained was 3.84 which is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50. This implies that the respondents agreed that that poverty is a major factor preventing Girl-Child from further education in FCT rural areas.

Research Question 2: Is cultural factor preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT?

Table 2. Cultural Factor

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Cultural factor is preventing Girl-Child from further education in FCT	151	84	36	29	3.68	Agree

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D; Disagree.

Table two result showed that the mean score collected was 3.68 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.25 meaning that the respondents agreed that Cultural factor is preventing Girl-Child from further education in FCT rural areas.

Research Question 3: Is early marriage preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT?

Table 3. Early Marriage

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Early Marriage is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT	227	73	-	-	3.89	Agree

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D; Disagree.

Result of table three indicated that mean score obtained was 3.89 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50 implying that respondents agreed that early marriage prevents Girl-Child from further education in FCT in rural areas.

Research Question 4: Is religion preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in FCT?

Table 4: Religious Factor

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Religious factor is preventing Girl-Child from furthering education in rural areas in FCT	195	85	12	8	3.74	Agree

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D: Disagree.

From table four, result obtained disclosed that mean score collected was 3.74 which is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50. This result means that respondents agreed that religion is a problem preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in F.C.T, Nigeria.

Research Question 5: Is long distance a factor preventing Girl-Child from further education in FCT?

Table 5. Distance Problems

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Distance is preventing Girl-Child from further education in FCT.	153	87	43	17	3.63	Agree

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D: Disagree.

Result of table five indicated that mean score obtained was 3.63 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50 implying that respondents agreed distance is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT.

Research Question 6: Is inadequate infrastructural facilities preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in FCT?

Table 6. Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Inadequate infrastructural facilities is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in FCT	184	56	8	7	3.12	Agreed

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D: Disagree.

From table six, result disclosed that mean score obtained was 3.12 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50 meaning that respondents agreed that inadequate infrastructural facilities is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in F.C.T, Nigeria.

Research Question 7: Is insecurity is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT?

Table 7. Insecurity

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Insecurity is preventing Girl-Child from further education in FCT	129	121	35	15	3.17	Agreed

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D; Disagree.

Table seven result disclosed that mean score obtained was 3.17 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50 implying that respondents agreed that insecurity is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT.

Research Question 8: Does poor implementation of Child-right policy a factor preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT?

Table 8. Poor Implementation of Child-Right Policy

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Poor implementation of Child-right policy is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in FCT	165	95	27	135	3.15	Agreed

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D; Disagree.

From table eight, result obtained disclosed that mean score obtained was 3.15 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50 implying that respondents agreed that poor implementation of Child-right policy is a factor preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of F.C.T.

Research Question 9: Is poor funding of Girl Child education a factor preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT?

Table 9: Poor Funding of Girl-Child Education

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Poor funding of Girl-Child- education is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in FCT	210	50	30	10	3.19	Agreed

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D; Disagree.

In table nine, mean score collected was 3.19 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50. This means that respondents agreed that poor funding of Girl-Child- education is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in F.C.T.

Research Question 10: Is corruption preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas of FCT?

Table 10. Corruption

S/N	Statement	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Mean (\bar{x})	Decision
1	Corruption is preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in FCT	115	101	30	14	3.13	Agreed

S/N: Serial Number; SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree; D; Disagree.

From table ten, result obtained disclosed that mean score obtained was 3.13 and is greater than the cutoff point of 2.50 implying that respondents agreed that poor funding of Girl-Child- education is one of the factors preventing Girl-Child from further education in rural areas in F.C.T, Nigeria.

Discussion

The results obtained from research question one revealed that low economic power (poverty), culture, early marriage, religion, distance, inadequate infrastructural facilities, insecurity, poor implementation of Girl-Child right bill, funding of Girl Child education and corruption are the factors preventing Girl-child from further education in rural areas in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. This implies that when poor parents are left with the choice of who to educate, they usually choose to educate boys and left the girls in the darkness of ignorance due to poverty. Culture also affects the education of girls because in some culture only boys receive education. Early marriage: many girls do drop out of school because of early marriage. The people in rural communities see early marriage as their culture and a way of preserve their girls from foreign influence. Religious beliefs: Western education is seen as a tool for conversion of people to Christianity historically and as such some people avoid it and it affect the education of girls. Distance: Many girls in rural area especially could not attend school or started but dropped out of school because of distance of the school from their homes.

Inadequate infrastructural facilities have also affected girl child education because without adequate infrastructure proper learning cannot take place and as such it lead to poor foundation which would discourage girls from continuing with school. The insecurity situation in Nigeria has affected girl child education because many families have been displaced from their homes and relocated to IDPs and many schools were destroyed and remained closed for long time. The nonchalant attitude of government in implementation of the child right education law has seriously affected the education of children especially girl child. Poor funding of the girl child education programme has seriously affected girl child education in Nigeria. Corruption: Corruption has also affected the smooth implementation of the girl child education programme because some government officials involved in the implementation do embezzle the money meant for the implementation of the programme and as such the programme suffered from inadequate funding.

In an ideal educational system, the enrolment rate, completion rate and transition rate should be proportional but in Nigeria especially in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The enrolment rate and completion and transition rate are not proportional due to many factors such as low economic power (poverty), culture, early marriage, religion, distance, inadequate infrastructural facilities, insecurity, poor implementation of Girl-Child right bill, funding of Girl Child education and corruption. This result agrees with the findings of Jacob (2020), World Bank (2017), UNICEF (2017), British Council (2012) that discovered that poverty, early marriage, cultural factor, religious factors, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate instructional materials, shortage of teachers, poor funding of education and lack of political will to implement child right enabling laws are challenges facing girl child education in Nigeria.

The problem facing the Basic education is not only on the enrolment rate, completion rate and transitional rate of the pupils but also the gender inequality. An ideal educational system should have room for both the girls and boys' education. Both girls and boys should be given the same opportunity to access quality education at every level of educational system.

CONCLUSION

One of the major problems facing the girl-child education in Nigeria and especially in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is the completion rate and transitional rate. When young girls enrolled in the school, there are many factors preventing them from completing their education and to even move to the next level of education. This study was designed to look at these problems. The objective of this study was to investigate on the factors preventing Girl-child from further education in rural areas in Federal Capital Territory. The objective of the study was realized because the major issues and problems preventing the girl child from further education were identified as follows: low economic power (poverty), culture, early marriage, religion, distance, inadequate infrastructural facilities, insecurity, poor implementation of Girl-Child right bill, poor funding of Girl Child education and corruption are the factors preventing Girl-child from further education in rural areas in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

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