

Nigeria's Female Educational Development Crises under Recessive Economy; The Way Forward

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Abstract

In any case, it is of relevance and worthy to note that for a proper understanding of the study entitled "Nigeria's Female Educational Development Crises Under Recessive Economy; The way forward" it would be interesting to note that it is an intellectual attempt to highlight the meaning and examine the concept of "female education from gender point of view, purely for the liberation of women against the bondage of gender inequality. The subject matter of the write – up largely centers on the explored and examined obstacles militating against Girl-Child Education with reference to its situation in some Northern states in the 21st Century. Both oral, published and unpublished sources were used in conducting the study. However, among the major causes of low level of enrolment and other impediments include, socio-economic, political and religious factors such as evolution of religious, economic and commercial ideologies of kidnapping, bargaining, ransom, activities of insurgencies, bandits, moral decadence, poverty, unemployment, failure of the parents and governments to reciprocate the gestures and unfortunate state of the parents and the Nigerian economies. The study found that it is very disheartening to highlight that fifteen Northern states are below average regarding the ratio of their girls in schools. The states are: Bauchi, Katsina, Benue, Jigawa, Adamawa, Niger, Sokoto and others, However, the study further shows that Katsina, Sokoto and Zamafara are as 23.6% of female enrolment. The international agencies, UK, Department for International Development in its commitment to support female education has as a result donated the sum of E25 million, Katsina, Sokoto, Benue, Borno, Niger and Jigawa are the beneficiaries, at the tail end, the study proffers the way forward.

Keywords: Nigeria, Female, Educational, Crises, Recessive, Economy, Forward.

Introduction:

“A Historical Study and Analysis of Nigeria’s Female Educational Development Crises during the Economic Recession of the 21st Century: The Way Forward” is a study largely centered on the contemporary political, economic and social obstacles confronting the Nigerian educational sector in general. The Historical Origin and Development of Women Education in Nigeria pre-dates the 1804 Sokoto Jihad. Boyd (1997) opines that prior to this period there was neither evidence of the emergence of women scholars nor schools dedicated for their education. Furthermore, Dangana (1991) argues that Nana Asma’u bin Fodio’s scholarly position and intellectual contributions to the development of female education were the major factors that laid the solid foundation of female education. He further claims that the conditions of women before the *Jihad* were deplorable; their status was largely confined to the issues of marriage, enslavement and concubinage. But, with the outbreak of the *Jihad* and the efforts of the Jihadists, female education began to take its right shape. In effect, the Jihad culminated in the rise of a number of female scholars particularly within the Sheikh’s family. These women became versed in Islamic sciences and produced many works. Among these women was Asma’u, whose contribution was what laid the concrete foundation of female education in *Hausaland*. The main contributions of Asma’u were the formation of “*Yantaru Organization*” in 1804 (Women Institute of Education) and publications for the purpose of facilitating female education. In addition, Boyd (1997) stresses that Asma’u bin Fodio had established education for women; this establishment was skillfully organized and successfully administered even after her death. In a nutshell, this demonstrates how religious Female Education began in the Northern Nigeria which is predominantly Muslim community prior to the appearance of the Europeans who were responsible for the introduction of Western Literacy form of Education in the whole of the Nigeria area and Africa at large.

A Brief Colonial Historical Survey of the Evolution of Some of the First Generation of Schools Established In Nigeria And the Quest For Right to Education:

In any event, it is worthy to note that past studies conducted have pointed out that girls and women respectively in Nigerian area and world at large have a Fundamental Human Right to Education and this right has been recognized since the 1948 Adaption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, UDHR (2014) State that female education has a significant impact on the development of the stable, prosperous and healthy nation states resulting in active, productive and empowered citizens. Female Education develops growth rates and reduces social disparities. Nigeria Population Control (NPC, 2009) observed that women with higher educational qualification are more likely to be in formal wage employment compared to those at the level of Primary School Education.

Furthermore, a relevant studies interacted with have also argued that a positive correlation exists between the enrolment of girls in primary schools and the Gross National Product (GNP) and increase of life expectancy. Because of this correlation, enrolment in school represents the largest component of the investment in human capital in any society. It should also be born in mind that rapid socio-economic of a nation depends on the quality of Women Education. Education provides women a disposition for the lifelong acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes, competence and disability.

In another related development, studies have further pointed out that prior, to 1920, primary and secondary education in Nigerian area was within the scope of Voluntary Christian Organizations. Further to the above, it has been highlighted by the studies that out of a total of 25 secondary school established in 1920, three of them were for Girls Education and the rest exclusively for boys still, by 1920 the British Colonial Government started providing out grant to Voluntary Associations involved in education, such grant-giving lasted till the early 1950's and at that point education was placed under the control of Regions. By 1949, only eight out of a total of 57 secondary schools were exclusively for girls. Some of such schools included: **Methodist** Girls High School, Lagos established in 1879, St. **Annes** School, Molete, Ibadan established in 1869, ST. Theresa's College, Ibadan, 1932, Queen College, Lagos 1927, Holy Rosary College, Enugu, 1935, Anglican Girls Grammar School, Lagos, 1945. Queen Amina College, Kaduna, Alhudda-Hudda, College, Zaria, mostly originated 1950's – 1960's. However, still six more notable schools had become into being. By 1960, there were fourteen notable girls schools, out of which ten were Co-educational Schools with sixty one boys enrolled for education. (Kabir, 2017).

Major Problems Militating Against Female Education in the Context of the Recessive Economy

Boyd (1997) opines that female education in the case of Northern Nigeria started in the 1930's, he further revealed that during this period of its introduction the problems that retarded its progress centered on Muslims' strong opposition to the reasons behind its introduction; these reasons bore relevance on religious, cultural, economic, traditional, political and gender issues. In any case, it should be noted that Boyd emphasizes that the track in which female education started in Nigeria was sloppy. In fact, there was no demand for this brand or education: it was against the whole of African opinion, Emirs, District Heads, Village Heads and the people (Boyd, 1997).

Buhari (2000) the problems confronting female education in contemporary Nigeria with special reference to the existing economic recession include: inefficient system of administration (oppressive rule), complete absence of resource control and inefficient governmental management. He listed other problems such as privatization of public corporations, inappropriate issuance of license for private schools to operate, bastardization of public schools, lack of patriotism, negligence of duty, mass production of female graduates without employment and failure of the Nigerian government and elite to address the problems. Furthermore, some Nigerians view the problems in terms of the poor financial status of the Nigerian state, which is not economically sound. Other people picture the problem from the diversion of International Agencies Financial Aids for education into personal accounts. Other problems include: the scarcity of funds for sponsoring research on female education. It is considered that these problems constitute major challenges confronting female education in recessive Nigerian economy.

Female Educational Development Crises In The 21st Century And The Quest For Prospects

In any event, no matter how valid, purposeful and significant an aspect is to the life of human society, challenges are inevitable. It is against this backdrop the study attempts to draw into light

some of the major problems confronting female education during the century under review within the Nigerian area with the sole aim of proffering everlasting solution.

Studies have demonstrated that modern Nigeria, with a special reference to the north low level of enrollment for girl-child and women education is one of the challenges confronting this brand of education. The obstacles are more severe in Northern Nigeria, the factors responsible among others include; issues of school access, family background, resources and attitudes towards education, school attendance in the North is normally impeded by the increasingly brazen extremism of **Boko-Haram**, bandit activities and Religious militant groups especially those targeting girls on campus, some of these groups aggressively and strongly oppose the Western style Education associated with formal schooling in Nigerian and seek to relegate women excessively to the house hold. However, it is consequent upon the case of risks associated with school-going are compounded for girls and young women in a context where Female Educational attainment is persistently low. However, it is very disheartening to state that in many Northern states more than 50% of young female between the ages of 15-24 have no experience with formal education (Figure 1. EPDC extraction of MICS, 2011 Dataset). More so, problems of general insecurity to lives and properties and the case of absolute reliance on colonially inherited intellectual legacies such as syllabuses and teaching learning methods are also problematic to the matter under review.

However, for a proper understanding of the case of general insecurity to lives and properties in Nigeria as an impediment to the progress of female education with a special reference to Northern Nigeria in particular therefore, it could be exemplified with the incidence of April kidnapping (**Chibok** girls) of an estimated 276 school girls in Borno state by **BokoHaram**. This testifies to the magnitude of risk that girls and young women bear when they attend schools. This challenge to safety accompanies great educational need in Borno, where the female secondary school net attendance rate is only 29% as compared to a national average of 53%. An additional 18% of secondary school age among the girls attend formal school in Borno but at the level of primary school. These girls may benefit from exposure to schooling but unfortunately left behind for their age and at greater risk of dropping out. Similarly, studies have further demonstrated that 7% of secondary school age girls attend non formal programmes. This is consequent upon an incensement in the volume of violence of the insurgency under review with particular reference to the incidence of **Boko-Haram** from 2010 to date. It is also worthy to note that even 54% of secondary school age girls that attend some schools formal or non-formal. In view of this, it is therefore safe for the study to point out clearly that 46% of girls of secondary school age do not attend both formal and non-formal educational programs which apparently shows that are not beneficiaries of western literacy form of education. (Kabir, 2013).

From the foregoing list of the obstacles raised above confronting Female Education in Nigeria, with a special reference to some Northern states. Therefore, it could be understood that stating the major educational needs of female education in Borno and across Northern Nigerian area requires an investment that is sensitive to the dangers of this context under Historical discourse aimed at proffering solution by having safe and full participation in schools.

The last but not the least of the educational development crises confronting our subject matter under review include the event of the economic and commercial ideologies of kidnapping ,

massive attacks of villages , towns, cities, brutal killing of innocent citizens (deluded masses), illegal bargaining or payment of ransom to release the kidnapped fellow mankind, high rate of poverty, unemployment, moral decadence, rule of inequality and as well as complete failure to rise to the responsibilities by the policy makers, are some of the factors responsible for the low level of female enrolment in school and the backwardness of this brand of education. However , Nigerian Economic recession is also inclusive this is because in an economically hard pressed time not every average Nigerian could sufficiently satisfy the basic needs of his family such as food in particular talk less of schooling which demands serious financial attention. (Kabir, 2013).

Post-Colonial Nigeria's Female Education; The Quest For Position And The Role Of Some International Agencies.

In view of the current economic hardship in Nigeria, many Agencies have become financially and morally committed to uplifting female education and their status against gender insensitivity. UNESCO (2000) states that one of the goals of International Organization including (HRD), Human Resource Development, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); Common Wealth of Nations and the African Union (A.U), is to eradicate gender disparity and alleviate hardships or eradicate poverty particularly in the sphere of education. UNICEF (1997) argues that a large number of females are out of schools compared to males. This made it very disheartening, when it was found that all the fifteen states that recorded below average in terms of the number of girls in schools were in the North, including Katsina, Bauchi, Benue, Adamawa, Niger, Sokoto and others. Of these, Katsina in particular, Sokoto and Zamfara States recorded as low as 23.6% of female enrolment. UNICEF has further stated that as part of the efforts to promote Girl – Child Education. The UK, Department for International Development has donated the sum of £25 Million. Katsina was one of the six beneficiaries; others were Sokoto, Bauchi, Borno, Niger and Jigawa.

Women's Status, Rights to Education and the Quest for Empowerment in the 21st Century:-

However, for a better understanding of the central focus of the study therefore, it would be interesting quote and relate with our write up Maryam Jameda (2003) in her study opines that Marx and Engels were of courses the founding fathers of commission and system of mode of economy which proved to be disastrous and ruthless system of government for survival. The aforementioned founding fathers in their political economic and social ideologies strongly argued that both marriage, home and family were nothing but a curse, which has a result kept women in perpetual slavery. They insisted that women must be liberated from domestic servitude and allowed to achieve full economic freedom by having full time employment in the industries. The interest of the study is highlight that the early acquisition of western literacy form of reeducation by girls and women over the ages has offered a golden opportunity for women to occupy a multitude number of prominent positions wide higher levels of exposure, there was also as a result an acceleration in the emergence rise and of women scholars women associations and establishment of schools on massive Nigerian area and beyond to a large extent, on contrary, our study found that the introduction of female education has brought about the wide spread use of contraceptives sterilization, abortion of unwanted/village pregnancies some families were broken

some children were neglected and abused, to some extent morality became decadent. In any event, it is worthy to note that most of the above pointed cases have occurred under the guise of combating gender insensitivity for equality to be attained. At this juncture, one may be convinced to accept the fact that the above raised obstacles are serious challenges partly responsible for low level of female enrolment and backwardness of this brand of education with a special reference to modern day Nigeria, and the North in particular. The study further discovered that infidelity and extra marital cases of sex are also among the challenges militating against the progress of female education in modern Nigeria, as well as social class. The whole scholarly effort herein is to highlight how infidelity and other forms of unchaste practice are now wide ranging and gaining a solid ground towards becoming the societal norms that perceive morality, virginity and chastity as radical backward and abnormal.

Furthermore, studies recently interacted with, which was conducted by National Research Centre (1995), has pointed out that violence in the family against women and children in modern Nigeria is one of the factors responsible for the outbreak of female educational development crises in the 21st Century. However in defense of Islam two prominent female Muslim scholars namely; Aburdeure and Nasbit (1993) have strongly argued that Islam as a religion it does not relegate women to the background nor does it deny them access to the right of education as wrongly mis-presented and assumed by some caliber of people. They further stressed that majority of the male practices against women in modern world are Unislamic, too contrary and wrongly misinterpreted, as far as Islamic law is concerned.

From the foregoing one may agree that still the above examined problems exist and the best way to overcome them include the provision of complete and sanitized system of life, which grants dignity and happiness to the classes of girls and women in schools and beyond, and as well as by satisfying them in the most favourable, honorable and respectable way against gender in balance. It should in addition be borne in our intellectual minds that the activities of secret cult members and the parents fear of enrolment have negatively contributed in making the existence of the identified challenges inevitable.

The last but not the least of the obstacles include: involvement into the activities of cultism deeply, or in the menace of secrete cults and drug abuse. In any case, it is worthy to note that cult activities are today very rampant, sporadically and harmful to academic life of both the staff and students in general. The forms of cult activities available on campus include: Campus Cult drug abuse, female cults, mafia cults, mafia cults and terrorist secret cult to mention but a few among several.

The Positive Development And Impact Of Female Education On Nigerian State And Society

Recent past studies conducted (Kabir, 2017) have stressed that it was consequent upon the Historical Evolution and development of Western Literacy form of education that give birth to the emergency, rise and influence of women from different geographical, economic, social and religious background to attend high level of status within Nigerian society. However, it is of relevance and importance to note that it was the acquisition of this brand of education by females that brought about the emergence of a multitude number of classes of women occupying

prominent positions such as consummate Politicians, Lecturers, Medical Doctors, Soldiers, Lawyers and so many others.(Kabir, 2017).

Zainab (2008) reflects that one of the profound impacts of female education on the society was the emergence of distinguished public figures in the post-colonial era. Kabir (2015) in his study of the History of formal Education in the Katsina pointed out that female education led to the In the case of Katsina, Late Hajia Hassu Iro Inko was one of the early educated women, Dr. Halima Adamu the first Female Medical Doctor in the whole North, Hajia Hajju Lawal, the first female judge in Katsina and Hajiya Binta Remawa, the first female Lawyer. Other impact include: the emergence of women Association, acquisition of professionalism in feminine skills: such as knitting dying and pottery.

Recommendations

Some of the problems militating against female education have been outlined: such as the following lapses: inefficient system of administration, scarcity of fund, looting of National treasury, financial mismanagement, negligence of duty and lack of patriotism to mention just a few. In view of these problems, the paper strongly recommends that good governance, efficient financial management, patriotism, devotion to duty, gender parity not disparity, moral and financial motivations are amongst some for confronting and overcoming the problems. Furthermore, privatization of the Nigerian economy is not an appropriate policy for economic development of the nation. The paper further suggests that resource control, proper maintenance and management of public utilities could as well; contribute in tackling female educational problems. The paper also recommends that leaders should be altruistic, just, dynamic and resourceful for reconstruction of the nation's economy.

The study further suggests that educationists should develop a culture of addressing educational problems for outstanding solution to be attained. There is also a need for the establishment of conducive atmosphere of learning and to ensure proper maintenance of all the related facilities and structures. Of equal importance, is also the need for both the governments at all levels, NGO's, parents and well-meaning Nigerian citizens to come to the aid of Girl-Child or Female Education to a large extent. At the tail end, the study debunks Nigerian policy makers for their failure to rise to the responsibilities ahead of them.

Conclusion

This presentation examined the concept of "Female Education" from gender point of view. It also considered the historical evolution, problems associated with this brand of education and its impact on our immediate Nigerian societies with particular reference to Northern Nigeria. The last part of the paper reflects on the contemporary position of female education in relation to the economic recession in Nigeria. In this study it has been explored and highlighted that the role of some international Agencies such as UNICEF, HRD and other related philanthropic organizations have both equally and significantly played a key role in the emancipation and promotion of girls and women's status, attainment of prominent position, they were liberated from social and religions bondage economically empowered and allowed to take part in nation

building project. Human Resource Development (HRD) Department International Development (UK DIFD) and (UNICEF).

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