

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323317611>

The Role School-Based Management Committee in the Improvement of Girl-Child Participation in Basic Education in North West Zone, Nigeria

Article · November 2017

CITATIONS

0

READS

2,190

2 authors, including:



Bala Bakwai Kwashabawa

Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Sokoto State, Nigeria.

20 PUBLICATIONS 7 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:



Modelling in Education [View project](#)



Teacher Education [View project](#)

**The Role School-Based Management Committee in the Improvement of Girl-Child
Participation in Basic Education in North West Zone, Nigeria.**

By

ODUWAIYE, R. O. (Ph.D)

**Department of Educational Management,
University of Ilorin**

Email: oduwaiyerhoda@yahoo.co.uk

Phone: 08033906694

&

BAKWAI, B.

**Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education and Extension Services,
Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.**

Email: bakwaibala@gmail.com

Phone: 08035448236

Published in “*JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT*”.
**ISSN: 2476 – 8375. An Official Journal of the Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.**

For References:

Oduwaiye, R. O. & **Bakwai, B. (2017)**. The role of school-based management committee in the improvement of girl-child participation in basic education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Foundations and Development*, 6, 80-95.

Abstract

Federal legislation in Nigeria supports social inclusion and gender equality; however, implementation is weak, with exclusionary informal norms, gender discrimination being dominant. In many Northern States of Nigeria, the combined impact of gender relations and some misinterpretation of Islam are constraining girl's access to basic education services. For this reason, this paper examined the role of School-Based Management Committee in improving girl-child participation in basic education in North West states, Nigeria. In doing this, the paper discussed the concepts of girl-child, basic education and school based management. The disparity in basic education between the North and the South which is historical was also briefly discussed. Gender imbalance in education in Nigeria, particularly in North Western state that seems to be distorting the on-going basic education reforms in Nigeria was discussed. The paper examined several factors that differentially influence female access to basic education particularly in Northern Nigeria. The challenges identified in this paper which affect SBMCs' performance in improving girls' participation in basic education include community believes on girls' status, poor implementation of laws protecting the right of a child, the school organizational pattern, school location and early marriage. The paper recommended among other things that the SBMC should facilitate the implementation of Child Right Act in all the North Western states and that rewards for excellent performance by girls in basic education should be encouraged.

Keywords: gender; girl-child; girl-child education; basic education; school based management committee.

Introduction

Nigeria is a signatory to various international agreements among which are the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (UNICEF, 2014). To fulfil these international agreements, Nigeria has set up structures towards the achievement of the Rights of the Nigerian children, especially as they relate to EFA and MDGs. The major thrust of Education sector reforms in Nigeria in the past decade has been to widen access and improve the quality of education delivery in a manner that is equitable. To achieve this, a series of actions and interventions are on-going in the sector. Although some positive gains have been recorded in some aspects as a result of these interventions and reform initiatives, the education performance indicators (EPI) and other development indicators for the country have remained on the low side and therefore generally unimpressive. Since 1999, when Universal Basic Education was launched, a good deal of attention and resources has been devoted to achieving EFA and Education MDGs ahead of the deadline of 2015 (UNICEF, 2014). Nigeria's emphasis has since shifted from 6-year primary education to 9-year basic education, with additional attention given to girls' participation in education at all level. Federal legislation supports social inclusion and gender equality; however implementation is weak, with exclusionary informal norms such as ethnic bias, discrimination based on indigeneity, gender, disability, HIV status and age being dominant (Akunga, 2010). In many Northern States of Nigeria the combined impact of gender relations and some misinterpretation of Islamic injunctions are constraining girl's access to basic education services.

Achievement of effective and efficient girls' participation in basic education in Nigeria and Northern states in particular is constrained by these exclusionary dynamics that lead to girls as marginalized and discriminated against groups. For this reason, Nigeria is striving to ensure that all children (particularly girls) have unfettered access to education through the implementation of the universal basic education programme reforms. However, despite these efforts, the education sector is still characterized by a variety of challenges that made access and participation of girls in education very difficult particularly in Northern Nigeria (Akunga, 2010). Additional efforts have to be by communities to supports the government. To this end, this paper examined the contribution of SBMC in improving girls' participation in basic education in North Western Nigeria.

Concept of Girl-Child

The concept of Girl-Child has been a neglected phenomenon until after the Beijing Conference of 1995 and the rectification of the Child Rights Act (Isaac, 2014). With gender equity being advocated by both International and National Development Partners, the matter concerning girl-child has now come to limelight in the issue of development most especially on the provision of basic human needs such as education and health care services (Lawal, 2014). Female-child education is very important for the overall development of the country. The place of women in the overall development of any society is fundamental such that any deliberate neglect of their education could point to danger for the entire society. As it is often said, to teach a man is to teach an individual but to teach a woman is to teach a family and the whole nation (Abbagana, 2013).

The girl-child is a female human being from birth to 18 years of age. Ponte (2006) sees, girl children as socially constructed category around female persons between 0 and 18 years. It is the age before one becomes young adult. This period covers the stages of nursery or early child hood (0- 5years), primary (6-12years), and junior secondary school (12-15years). During these stages, the young child (girl-child) is completely under the care of the adult who may be her parents or guardians and older ones around. During this period, the girl-child's character and personality is built and developed and as well influenced by those around her as she is much dependant on others, those on whom she models her behavior, through observation, repetition and imitation (Atama, 2012).

Girl-child has also been defined by Offorma (2009) as a biological female offspring from birth to 18 years of age who is able to build her physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional developments start and progress to get to the peak at the young adult stage. In this paper, the term girl-child is used to mean any female child between the age of 6-15, normal or special, married or single, mother or not, who have the intellectual ability of participating in basic education.

Basic Education in North Western Nigeria

Basic Education means the type of education given in the first level of education. The meaning of basic education changes from country to country. In Nigeria, basic education was equated with six years of primary schooling in the past. Currently basic education is extended to include

the three years of Junior Secondary School. It embraces formal and non-formal education including education of the marginalized groups within the Nigerian society. The Programme is aimed at eradicating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty (UBEC, 2013).

Basic education in North Western Nigeria as compared to other zones in the south is very low. The disparity in basic education between the north and the south is historical. Primary education in Nigeria started from the south and moved through the forces of colonialism and Christian missionary activities to the north where Islamic system of education has already been established. The total acceptance of modern education in the south as being in conformity with Christians' religion and the north reluctance to accept it as viewed to be against the Islamic religion account for the disparity (Okobiah, 2002).

The great fear is that this disparity will continue to widen except some drastic measures are taken. The magnitude of this disparity in education can easily be dictated in any simple educational data provided from authentic studies. For example, data on Out-of-School Children (OOSC) (UNICEF, 2014) can portray these facts on disparity of education between the south and the north.

Table 1: Magnitude and Categories of Out-Of-School (OOSC) Children in by Geo-political Zone and State (Primary Age)

S/No	Zone	State	Total Population of Primary Age Children	Out of School Children		School Exposure of OOSC (%)		
				Number	%	Dropped Out	Expected to enter at age 17	Expected to never Enter
1	South West	Ekiti	404,953	11,921	2.9	0.00	63.2	36.8
2		Lagos	1,223,027	52,421	4.3	22.1	50.4	27.5
3		Ogun	596,887	25,549	4.3	22.1	27.6	50.3
4		Ondo	575,249	34,660	6.0	10.2	85.1	4.7
5		Osun	564,465	42,477	7.5	6.5	90.2	3.3
6		Oyo	915,208	185,544	20.3	7.6	15.8	76.6
7	North West	Jigawa	821,822	506,087	61.6	5.7	5.3	89.0
8		Kaduna	1,146,558	266,517	23.2	4.6	24.4	71.0
9		Kano	1,822,366	729,285	40.0	5.6	13.7	80.7
10		Katsina	1,125,905	620,667	55.1	4.0	1.9	94.1
11		Kebbi	633,498	437,963	69.1	1.9	4.7	93.3
12		Sokoto	705,549	460,492	65.3	0.3	6.3	93.4
14		Zamfara	633,545	482,739	76.2	1.1	0.9	98.0

Source: Adopted from UNICEF, (2014).

Table 1 provides a detailed overview of the magnitude of out-of-school children in Nigeria for primary-aged children in each state of the two geopolitical zones. The results show tremendous

variation in the OOSC problem in Nigeria between both states and zones. For example, 69.1 and 76.5 per cent of primary aged children are not in school in the state of Kebbi and Zamfara (North West zone) respectively, compared with only 2.9 and 4.3 per cent in the state of Ekiti and Lagos (South West) respectively too. Apart from that, the number of out-of-school children to go back to school is low in the North West zone (8%) compared to that of the South West zone (53%). The tremendous variation in the percentage of basic schools' children who are out of school in Nigeria indicated that the highest percentage is found in the North West zone with average of over 50 per cent. This regional variation has important implications for education policy and equity, hence, conducting a study of this nature becomes necessary.

Girl-child Education in North Western Nigeria

Female-child education is very important for the overall development of the country. The place of women in the overall development of any society is so fundamental that any deliberate neglect of their education could point to danger for the entire society. A girl-child in Nigeria has had her destiny sealed from birth by tradition and culture on account of her biological sex (Oyigbenu, 2010). Several studies have found that girls are accorded lower status in the family (Njoku 2007; Okeke, Okwo & Oreh, 1996). Some parents believe that it is the male child that would inherit their property and perpetuate the names of their families, while the female children would naturally be given out in marriage to other families. Parents therefore tend to invest more in the education of their sons than the education of their daughters. Thus if children have to be withdrawn from school due to financial crunch, it is the female children who are withdrawn first before the males (Okeke & Rufai, 2004). Even when they have the means to educate her, they would always refrain from doing so (Isaac, 2014). This cultural attitude to females' education at the family level may explain at least in part the higher proportion of females among out-of-school children in Northern Nigeria.

Another set of factors explored in the literature, which serve as hindrance to girl participation in basic education particularly in Northern Nigeria, includes: Cultural-religious factors; economic condition of the household; school organization; opportunity cost of formal education; parent level of education; labour market opportunities; government policy and management (Jiya, 2005; Indabawa, 2004; Oniye & Okoro, 2006; Bukar, 2004; Adamu, 2005; Abbagana, 2013; Isaac, 2014). Indabawa (2004) for instance maintained that the misunderstanding of the position of

Islam in girls' education hindered their education participation in most part of Northern Nigeria. Some muslims are ignorant of the right of girl-child in education, hence they concentrated on the education of the male children. Other muslims still equate modern education with Christianity or westernization or both. Their belief is anchored on the historical origin of western education in Nigeria.

To help girls participate in education, the Federal Government of Nigeria in partnership with Department for International Development (DFID) and United Nation Children Fund (UNICEF) established Girls' Education Project (GEP). The project, which is working to improve girls' access to education and learning in four Northern States, was designed and launched in 2005 following the successful implementation of African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI – 2001-2003) and is now in its third phase (GEP3). Phase 1 (GEP1) ran from 2005 until 2008; Phase 2 (GEP2) ran from 2008 until 2012; and Phase 3 is due to run until 2019 (UNICEF, 2014). The project was initially implemented in six northern states of Nigeria (Borno, Jigawa, Bauchi, Katsina, Sokoto and Niger), with the worst disparities between boys' and girls' enrolment in primary school (Akunga, 2010; Isaac, 2014). Despite this government commitment to improve girls' participation in basic education, the education of the girl-child is still behind that of the boys (OlaREWaju, 2002). In the same vein, Nnaka and Anaekwe (2006) reported that females are grossly under-represented in terms of enrolment, participation and achievement in basic education. Also, Agwagah and Aguele (2007) asserted that gender imbalance in education is a major issue desired to be given needed emphasis in the on-going basic education reforms embarked upon by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Table 2 shows this imbalance.

Table 2: Gross Enrolment Ratio and Net Enrolment Rates 2006-2014, by Primary Level and Gender

Level/Group:	2006	2008	20010	20012	2014
Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)					
Primary	97.8	100.9	102.8	85.0	83.3
Female	88.6	92.1	95.2	80.1	79.3
Male	106.6	109.3	110.1	89.9	87.1
Net Enrolment Rate (NER)					
Primary	----	66.5	67.8	58.8	57.6
Female	----	61.8	63.9	55.4	54.8
Male	----	71.1	71.6	62.0	60.1

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics in UNICEF (2014)

In primary schooling the trends during the 2006-2014 period were somewhat mixed. As noted in the table, participation was increasing both on a gross and net basis between 2002 and 2006, but

since 2006, the trend has been negative with girls' enrolment always lagging behind that of boys. This is a difficult result to explain, since it suggests that families are less likely to send their children to school in recent years than before. Gender disparity analysis of available data has revealed that more females (32.4%) are out of school than males (26.9%). These differing male and female proportions can be accounted for by the several factors that differentially influence female access to basic education particularly in Northern Nigeria (UNICEF, 2014). The evidence of this trend in Northern Nigeria can be seen in table 3.

Table 3. Universal Basic Education Commission Pupils Enrolment by Classes by Gender in Primary Schools for 2014/2015 (Extract)

S/No	State	Number of Schools	Primary 1-6		
			M	F	Total
1.	Jigawa	1918	303,604	232,595	536,200
2.	Kaduna	4026	566,049	482,639	1,048,688
3.	Kano	5335	1,036,525	940,585	1,977,110
4.	Katsina	2175	911,238	618,145	1,529,383
5.	Kebbi	1635	296,193	168,856	465,049
6.	Sokoto	1890	527,109	291,455	818,564
7.	Zamfara	1314	192,451	91,188	283,639
	Total	18,293	3,833,169	2,824,563	6,657,732

Source: Extracted from UBEC (2015)

In table 3 it can be seen that enrolment ratio differ between the boys and the girls. In Jigawa, the proportion of boys to girls enroll in primary school was at 3:2 in the 2011/2012 academic session. While in Sokoto and Zamfara it was as high as 5:3 and 2:1 respectively. In the North Western zone of Nigeria, the average boys and girls enrolment proportion was 3:2 in 2011/2012 academic session (UBEC, 2015).

This indicated that people in North Western states of Nigeria, are still holding unto some of the cultural beliefs which greatly influences female access to basic education very adversely. For instances, Njoku (2007), have identified early marriage as a major hindrance to girls' access to education in some parts of the northern states of Nigeria. Moreover, in most sub-cultures in the North West, the mother of the girls has to provide bride wealth with which the young girl would start her own home. In North Western Nigeria, this cultural practice is called 'KAYAN DAKI'. In poor families, for instance, it is very difficult to provide the 'KAYAN DAKI'. The girl-child is therefore made to carry on some economic activities like hawking in order to raise money with which to buy and accumulate household utensils that would be used for the 'KAYAN DAKI'. Girls in this situation may not enroll in school, and would definitely be unable to attend school

regularly, participate effectively or achieve highly in school's work. They are at high risk of dropping out of school to get married or due to poor academic performance and the attendant class repetitions (Njoku, 2007; Okeke, Nzewi & Njoku, 2008; Isaac, 2014).

School Based Management in North Western Nigeria

School-based management is the operationalization of the concept of decentralization. It is the decentralization of decision and policy-making authority from boards of education to the local school communities which portends significant changes in educational institutions. It serves to mobilize the community in the interest of the school and fight the various factors hindering children's access, retention, and completion of basic education in their community. Decentralization will make it possible for the community to participate in the decision making of the school (Ogundele & Adelabu, 2009; Abu-Duhou, 1999).

School-based management is "a way of forcing individual schools to take responsibility for what happens to the children under their jurisdiction and attending their school. The concept suggests that, when individual schools are charged with the total development of educational programmes aimed at serving the needs of the children in attendance at that particular school, the school personnel will develop programmes that are more cogent because they know the students and their needs (Candoli, 1995; Ogundele & Adelabu, 2009)

School-based management committee in Nigeria is a form of community involvement in school governance, based on regulation with elected but voluntary membership. The communities are to ensure quality both in educational inputs and outcomes and quality in learning environment for schools (Ogundele & Adelabu, 2009). GEP and ESSPIN have been involved with setting up School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) and training their members. The practices of School Based Management Committee may vary according to each zone and state policies but the goals typically include (Akinsolu & Onibon, 2008):

- (i) increasing the participation of parents and communities in schools,
- (ii) empowering school administrators and teachers,
- (iii) building local level capacity,
- (iv) improving quality and efficiency of basic schools, and perhaps the most importantly,
- (v) providing equity and equality in access to basic education.

SBMC Approaches to Improving Girls Education in North Western Nigeria

The SBMCs through Girls' Education Project (GEP) have introduced Whole School Development Planning (WSDP) in the North West. Functional SBMCs characterised the GEP schools, which have responded positively to the requirement on engaging a minimum of three women. Occasionally, some of the SBMCs had a female membership of nearly 50% as observed in some of the LGAs in North West zone. Of the 12,409 members in the 720 GEP focus schools, 2,978 are women, representing 21%. In these states, SBMCs members monitored and evaluated girls' education programmes and strengthening inspectorate to ensure that the planning of school projects, effective and prudent management of school resources, accountability in financial management, and conflict resolution were made effective in their schools.

Generally, SBMCs in all North West states had adopted flexible approaches to increasing school participation rates for boys and girls through various strategies that include, household mapping to identify families with children of school going age and persuade these families to enroll their female children in school. The SBMCs promote synergy between girls' education programme and poverty alleviation programmes through family based education insurance policy (ACAI, 2012). It is contradictory to discuss poverty alleviation or eradication measures in a peripheral capitalist economy like Nigeria that thrives on creating poverty. However, poverty on the part of parents and guardians of the girl-child has featured prominently in issues and challenges of girl-child education that efforts have to be made to remedy this parlous socio-economic situation. Past efforts at poverty alleviation in Nigeria such as the Directorate for Food, Rural Road and Infrastructure (DIFFRI), the Family Support Program (FSP), the Better Life for Rural Women programme and the National Programme on the Eradication of Poverty (NAPEP) have failed because they depended on funds from the government to prosecute their projects (Anah, 2013). The SBMC approaches the empowerment through family based education insurance policy that is hinged on the participation of cooperative societies as a way of ensuring that poverty within the family does not compromise the girl-child's educational opportunities. Women Economic Empowerment Initiative (WEEI) is being tried by SBMC with some registered women groups so that they could start some income generating activities to be able to release daughters to school (UNICEF, 2014).

The girl-child in Nigeria is socialized to accept a subordinate self-image to the boy. This is because a close relationship exists between personality and culture in the sense that the development of personality and the acquisition of cultural traits are the same learning process (Anah, 2013). SBMCs raises national awareness in girl-child education and increase political and financial commitment through advocacy and sensitization of policy makers at all levels, as well as parents, school authorities, other leaders and girls' themselves. The SBMCs in collaboration with Government and other stakeholders also review the existing curricula and teaching materials for gender sensitivity (UNICEF, 2007). In this manner, they try to reorder and correct the social values that place higher premium on the boy than the girl-child need. On the other hand, they expose the girl child to the fact that in learning there is nothing inherently inferior in her in relation to the boy. In building the self-image which to a large extent determines girl-child worth, the girl-child needs positive feedback from parents, friends, relations and the society at large. This is the essence of the SBMC re-socialization approach. They mobilize schools, churches and families in the north to make them understand that girl-child social roles are culture based. Thus, confining the girl-child to the care economy, domestic or household chores, street hawking and rural agriculture is actually not an advantage to the girl.

School Based Teacher Development Programme (SBTDP) which help to build teachers capacities and skills so that the learning outcomes of the pupils will improve; and Students' Tutoring, Mentoring and Counseling Programme (STUMEC) which has been rolled out and is being implemented in the GEP states to help reduce the failure and dropout rates of girls are good examples of the different approaches used by SBMCs in promoting girls education in the North West, Nigeria.

Challenges Affecting SBMC performance in Improving Girls Education in North Western Nigeria

The challenges affecting SBMCs' performance in improving girls' participation in basic education include the following:

1. Community belief on girls' status

Over the years, the role of females in Northern Nigeria has been maintained to child bearing and housekeeping. This is why, in most of these states male children are groomed for career

development while females are guided to concentrate their efforts on housekeeping. Therefore, in North Western Nigeria, social relations and activities of girls and boys are governed by patriarchal system of socialization and cultural practices, which favour the interest of boys above those of girls (Oyigbenu, 2010). This conceptualization of the status of the girls by the societies make the female-child only plays subordinate roles to those of the male child and is sent to school if only it is convenient for the parents to bear the cost. The male child is given preferential treatment because of the notion that he will grow up to maintain the family identity. This trend has inevitably led to the low enrolment of girls in secondary schools and their high dropout rate in the North (Abbagana, 2013).

2. Early Marriage

Early marriage among girls have been the major excuse for low female enrolment in basic schools more especially in the North Western part of Nigeria where Islam permits (but does not compel) girls to be married out early in life (Abbagana, 2013). Early marriage is common in the North Western region and girls are often married shortly after puberty within the ages of 12 to 15 years and this is the period when most are expected to transit to secondary school (Tahir, 2005). This high rate of early marriage deprives these girls from completing their basic education and hence could not further to higher level of education.

3. The School Organizational Pattern

The school organizational pattern also constitutes some challenges. Some studies (Abbagana, 2013; Oyigbenu, 2010; Salman, Olawole & Yahaya, 2011) report that in most schools, existing school set-up, instructional materials and other educational activities re-enforce the inequalities between the male and female child. Co-curricular activities in schools are more or less male dominated in nature (e.g school games) and make no provision for the peculiar academic needs of the female child. By implication therefore, the functioning of the school tends to portray male superiority and domination. For example, the introduction of “hijab” for girls and long trousers for boys had encouraged parents to participate in school activities and enroll their daughters in school. Although, there is still lingering complaints about girls’ dresses in some pictures of school text books, which to so many parents in Zamfara state will corrupt the mind of their daughters hence their reluctance to release their daughters to schools (Bakwai, 2013a).

4. School Location

Relatively long distances to school, which exceed 7-10 kilometres such as noted in so many communities of the North West basic schools, often served as disincentives to schooling, especially for families that needed to release their daughters to school. Even as pupils, reportedly attended school regularly in spite of the distance, many arrived late, especially during the rainy season, thus affecting participation and performance (Indabawa, 2004; Salman, Olawole & Yahaya, 2011). This long distance affects the efforts of SBMCs in trying to mobilize parents to enroll their daughters in school.

School location is very important as many parents in the North are known to be protective of their daughters. They therefore will not allow their daughter to walk long distance to school, at the primary level or to travel far away to boarding school because of fear of sexual harassment and to keep their daughter under closer watch (Oniye & Okoro, 2006). Introduction of unisex basic schools close to communities could be of serious help in the education of girls in the North West, Nigeria.

5. Poor Implementation of Laws Protecting the Right of a Child

The “Hawking by Children, Edict Cap.58 Law of Nigeria” which prohibits hawking, display of goods for sale, or roaming about in the street, market or any open public places in the states is another law on child protection that is not being implemented. It is sad to note that these efforts have made marginal or no impact on improving child welfare or specifically reducing incidence of child labour and street children. This is largely because these measures have been uncoordinated, not well implemented and largely un-enforced (ICAI, 2012). If these laws were enforced or implemented, child labour and exploitation would be minimized while female children’s school enrolment, retention and completion would improve in North West zone, Nigeria.

6. Lack of Communities Awareness of the SBMCs

Awareness of the SBMCs or their activities is still very low in the rural communities in the North Western States. Only one in ten fathers and one in 20 mothers are aware of SBMC existence in some states in the North West. Knowledge of the SBMC was affected by distance from the school, socio- economic status and political connectedness (FGN, 2008).

7. Poverty among Community Members

Poverty among the community members in the North Western states is one of the serious factors affecting SBMC efforts in improving girls' education in Nigeria. It poses major challenges for mobilizing educational resources in the form of funds. Since most of the communities were farmers, raising funds for executing the girls' projects was a major problem expressed (FGN, 2008). The SBMCs cannot raise all the resources to rebuild the schools on their own. Some State governments, however, have been slow to engage with and support DFID's grant programmes, which can meet only limited needs. Clear bidding processes are not common, so school SBMCs feel frustrated at the lack of responses to the needs of girls initiated projects. There is insufficient transparency in the spending of State educational capital improvement funds. SBMCs should have sought more secure commitments from States before beginning their grant programmes (UNCEF, 2012). All that remained for SBMCs is to resort to communities for fund mobilization and these communities are very poor if not extremely poor.

8. Parents' Negligence on Children's Welfare

Most parents in the North West, particularly in Zamfara state, tend to avoid their responsibilities of sending their children to school. Some of them misunderstand the teaching of Islam that mandated children to look after their aged parents. To some of these parents, their only responsibility is to tender the children until after their infancy period and no more. As soon as a child begins to understand 'bring this' or 'take this away' then it is the child's duty now to serve his parents or else meet with God wrath. On this ground, many parents abandoned their male children to almajiri schools and female children who could not be sent far away are subjected to hawking and other domestic activities at the expense of their education (Bakwai, 2013b). This attitude among parent is generally responsible for most of the problems affecting children education in the North Western communities. For example, some parents may use the word poverty only as an excuse not to send their wards to school. This is because some parents who refused to send their daughters to school on the ground of poverty may be able to spend huge amount of money on issues that are not necessarily demanding. They may establish court case and spend hundreds of thousands of Naira but cannot spend just one hundred Naira for their children' education. Some parents who use distance as an excuse may send away their daughters farther enough for hawking and other form child of exploitations.

Conclusion

In this paper, evidence have shown that North Western Nigeria has a long way to go as regards participation of girl-child in basic education. There are possibilities of improving the girl-child participation in education through the present efforts made by SBMCs. Once the approaches of these SBMCs are strengthened and managed to take care of the challenges affecting their performance, the problem of girl-child education in North West states will be a history in the nearest future. To make this dream realizable in these states, the curriculum and general organization of basic school must conform to the very culture and the religious beliefs of the people.

Recommendations

The following are some of the recommendations that are put forward for improving girl-child participation in basic schools.

1. The SBMC should facilitate the implementation of Child Right Act in all the North West states. This would go a long way in checkmating indiscriminate child abuse and gender disparity.
2. SBMC should encourage the few educated women to form a forum at community level. This forum should be encouraged to visit schools and encourage female students to pursue education at all cost instead of narrowing their minds on getting married earlier.
3. SBMCs should try to secure jobs for female youths, who attained a reasonable level of education. This is a way of encouraging more girls to participate in basic education. These employed young women should serve as resource persons to their community schools in order to motivate female students to remain in school after enrolment.
4. Rewards for excellent performance by girls in basic should be encouraged by the SBMCs. This would serve as a challenge and encourage healthy competition among the girls and with their male counterparts.
5. Seminars and workshops should be organized by SBMCs at local level for girls in basic schools where professional counselors would be invited to deliver lectures on career choice. This is to eliminate the impression in girls that most careers are masculine and made for boys only.

6. Massive community enlightenment campaigns on the importance of girl-child education should continue to be advocated for by SBMCs.
7. SBMCs should encourage the recruitment of educated mothers from within the communities as teachers in their basic schools who will also serve as role models.
8. SBMCs should collaborate with relevant agencies to establish continuing education schools and/or centres at the local level that will take care of married girls' continuing education. This will help girls affected by early marriage to complete their basic education and proceed to higher level of education.
9. The SBMCs should facilitate the provision of secured school environment and arrange for security of the girls going to school and coming back home. This will encourage parents who are over protective of their children to allow their daughters go to school.

References

- Abbagana, K.K. (2013). Female – child education: a critical issue for national development in Nigerian. *Journal of Education and Leadership Development*, 5(2).
- Abu-Duhou, I., 1999, School-Based Management. Paris : UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Adamu, Y. (2005). Policy Makers and Stakeholders Advocacy. A Paper Presented at Sensitization Workshop to Enhance Girls Participation in Education. Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria.
- Afforma, C. Grace (2009). Girl-Child Education in Africa. The Road Map for the Nigerian Education Sector. A Paper presented at a Conference in Federal Ministry of Education on Monday 20th July.
- Agwagah, U. N. & Aguele, I. L. (2007). Female participation in Science, Technology and Mathematics (STM) education in Nigeria and National Development. *Journal Social Sciences*, 15(2):121- 126.
- Akinsolu, T. & Onibon, N. (2008). *Training manual for community facilitators and members of SBMC*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.
- Akunga, A. (2010). Northern Nigeria: approaches to enrolling girls in school and providing a meaningful education to empower change. *Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equity*. Dakar, Senegal: United Nations Girls' Education Initiatives.
- Anah, C. I. (2013). Social Values and Insecurity: Surmounting Obstacles to Girl-Child Education in Nigeria; A Sociological Perspective. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 2(10), 153-156
- Atama, G. C. (2012). Girl-child education: A challenge for sustainable development in Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3 (14). Retrieved on 15th May, 2014 from <http://www.mcser.org/images/stories/M>
- Bakwai, B. (2013a). Assessment of the role of school community relationship in the development of secondary education in Zamfara state. *Sokoto Educational Review*, 14(1), 55-62.
- Bakwai, B. (2013b). Administrative challenges and strategies of managing school community relationship in Secondary schools in Zamfara state, Nigeria. *Sokoto International Journal of Councelling Psychology*, Maiden Edition.
- Bukar, A. D. (2004). Analysis of the Situation and Key Factors that Hinders Girls Education in Borno State. A Paper Presented at Sensitization Workshop on Girl-child Education, in Maiduguri, Nigeria.
- Candoli, I. C. (1995). *Site-based management in education: how to make it work in your school*. Lancaster: Technomic Publishing Co.

- FGN, (2008). Girls' Education Project (GEP) Evaluation Report.
- Indabawa, S. A. (2004). Some socio- cultural determinants of girls in education in Nigeria.
- Independent Commission for Aid Impact (2012). DFID's Education Programmes in Nigeria. Report Number 16.
- Isaac , W. H. (2014). Girl-Child education: Important for national development. Daily Independent Newspaper Sunday, July 06, 2014.
- Jiya, R. R. (2005). Female education and sustainable rural development in Nigeria.
- Lawal, H. A. (2014). Development intervevtion in basic education: enhancing girl-child education in rural community of Northern Nigeria. A master thesis on women, gender and development. International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands.
- Njoku, Z. C (2007). Improving Female Access to Education in Northern States of Nigeria: The Perception of Teachers, Parents and community Leaders. *Journal of the Nigerian Academy of Education (JONAED)* 3 (1) 44 – 60.
- Nnaka, C. V. & Anaekwe, M. C. (2005). Students' enrolment and achievement in STM at senior school certificate examinations (SSCE): Implications for availability and utilization of instructional resources. A paper presented at the 47th Annual Conference Proceeding of Science Teachers' Association of Nigeria (STAN); pp. 78-81.
- Ogundele, J. A. & Adelabu, M. A. (2009). Improving pupils quality through community advocacy: the role of School – Based Management Committee (SBMC). *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi- The Journal of International Social Research*, 2(8)
- Okeke E. A, C, Nzewi U.M & Njoku, Z. C. (2008). Tracking School Age Children's Education Status. In UNICEF A-Field States.
- Okeke E.A.C & Rufai A. R. (2004). Evaluation of African Girls Education Initiative (AGEI) in Nigeria.
- Okeke, E.A.C.; Oreh, C. I. & Okwo F.A. (1996). The Drop out of Males from Schools in Eastern States of Nigeria. A UNICEF Commissioned Research Study.
- Okobiah, O. S. (2002). The educational imbalance between the northern and southern states of Nigeria: a re-direction of educational policies. Unpublished Lecture Note Delta State University. Abaraka.
- Olarewaju, A. S. (2002). Empowerment of the girl-child through educational prospects. *Religious Forum Academic*, 2. (2), 24- 30.
- Oniye, M. I. & Okoro, N. (2006). Revitalizing girl education in Nigeria: Innovative approaches, and emerging challenges. *African Journal of Historical Science in Education*, 2(2), 45-54. Retrieved on 15th May, 2014 from <http://unilorin.edu.ng/publications/oniyeme/>

- Oyigbenu, M. (2010). Girl-Child Education and Nigeria's Development Agenda: a Literary Perspective. *African Research Review: An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal* , *Ethiopia*, 4 (2), 418-432.
- Ponte, B. Nicole. (2006). Girl-child Empowerment: A Challenge for all. United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in Collaboration with UNICEF Expert Group Meeting Eliminating of all Forms of Discrimination and Violence Against the Girl-Child. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre Florence, Italy, 25-28 September.
- Salman, F.; Olawoye, F. A. & Yahaya, L. A. (2011). Education reforms in Nigeria: implications for the girl- child participation in sciences, technology and mathematics (STM). *Education Research Journal*, 1(1), 1 – 8. Retrieved on 3rd February, 2014 from <http://resjournal.com/ERJ/pdf/>
- Tahir, G. (2005). Universal basic education in Nigerian. the journey so far. In Maduewesi, E. (eds). *Nigeria Journal of Teacher Education and Teaching*. Asaba, 1 (1), 217-24.
- UBEC (2013). *Revised guidelines for the development of school-based management committees*. Abuja: Social Mobilization Department. Retrieved on Tuesday 21 January, 2013 from <http://www.ubeconline.com/>
- UBEC (2015). Facts and figures: 2012 enrolment by state. Retrieved on 3rd February, 2014 from <http://www.ubeconline.com/facts-figures/enrolment/>
- UNICEF (2014). All children in school by 2015: Global initiatives on out-of-school children. Nigeria Country Study.
- UNICEF (2007). Girls' education. Information sheet. Nigeria Country Office