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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN ENROLMENT AND COMPLETION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL GIRLS IN ILORIN WEST AND ILORIN SOUTH

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Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate gender equality in enrolment and completion of primary school girls. The report in this study constitutes a comprehensive survey on the reason primary school enrolment rate for girls lag behind those of boys. The study also feature the post Millennium Development Goal Agenda, setting out recommendations for the education sector at the international, national and local level with the aim of transforming the experiences of girls at school. This empirical study contains some basic statistics on the level of girl's exclusion from education Ilorin West and Ilorin South. It presents statistical information on gender equality. It also presented the multi-faceted strategies necessary to address not only different dimensions of girls and women lives but understand gendered relationships and structurally entrenched inequalities between women and men, girls and boys. Also it analysed the way schools can perpetrate gender stereotypes and investigated how this can be prevented. A descriptive survey design was employed. A-9 four point Likert scale researchers questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument consists of (9) items administered to 360 respondents. Out of the 360 questionnaires dministered, 357 questinnaires were returned. Data collected were analysed using mean ratings while each case study ended with conclusion and a set of policy recommendations. Therefore, it was recommended that post- MDG goals are not sufficient for what need to be done to address girls' and women education needs, setting the target population too low and still, only in terms of access not attendance, completion and equality. Thus, the paper discussed some of the key challenges in achieving real gender equality in education providing examples of initiatives in a range of context, including gender- responsive budgeting in primary education. It was concluded that gender inequality exist among nations as regards girl-child right. It was recommended that the government should ensure that girl-child education is given utmost priority as the education policies should be well regulated to promote gender equality.

Introduction

The governments of Nigeria supported by civil societies, the donor communities, UN agencies, and other partners have made a commitment to the goal of education for all (EFA), and to gender equity/equality in education. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is facilitating the process to ensure girls are properly enrolled, stay in school and have quality education. They also agitated for a child friendly school, with an environment that is fun, healthy and engaging. A place where they can play, be protected from harm, express their views and actively participate in the learning process.

The goal of the Nigerian government especially in Ilorin West and Ilorin South is to remove gender disparity. In many countries, expansion of enrolments took place at the expense of the quality of the education that was provided. Children attended school where population were too large for learning to take place, teachers not properly trained and supported, as well as provision of learning materials grossly inadequate. Many were taken taken for granted, gender inequalities and difficult in schools meant that girls and children from the poorest families were sidelined in terms of learning provision. The stress of the MDGs on the expansion of enrolment meant that inadequate attention was given in policy and practice to other key areas of work in education (e.g curriculum teacher development, complimentary programmes) that contribute to progress for girls. Empowering girls at this level will help in

achieving the MDGs in that, it will foster progress on girl's education.

Looking into the expansion in provision of education for all children since 2000, and the special attention given to girls, it is difficult to separate out a casual impetus that can be linked to the MDGs, isolated from other contemporaneous initiatives. Some global frameworks that complimented the MDGs are associated with the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Platform of Action, also adopted in 2000, which has six key areas, and provided a perspective on girl's education. The goals for the Dakar platform of Action are:

- The expansion and improvement of early childhood education.
- Access to free compulsory education of good quality for all children.
- All learning to be appropriate for children and life skills included in learning.
- Improvement in levels of adult literacy.
- Gender disparities in Primary and secondary education to be removed.
- All aspects of quality of education, including measurable learning outcomes to be improved.

(Dakar Framework, 2000 pp. 5-17)

Thus, the convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) set out protection for children from violence and exploitation, the Beijing Platforms of Action, which linked girls schooling with wider sites of learning for women and approaches to gender mainstreaming.

Table 1: Presents UNESCO figures on the decrease in the number of children out of school between 1999 and 2000, and the changing ratio of girls in different regions.

Demography	Children out of school in 1999 000	% girls out of school in 1999 000	Children out of school in 2010 000	% girls out of school in 2010. 000
Arab states	8423	59	5036	61
Central and Eastern Europe	1644	57	931	49
Central Asia	439	52	317	54
East Asia & Pacific	10344	51	6579	44
Latin America/Caribbean	3607	55	2652	50
N. America & West Europe	901	48	1267	45
South & West Asia	40081	64	13261	55
Sub-saharan Africa	42174	54	30641	53
World	107614	58	60684	53

Source: UNESCO, 2012, 354-5

It can be seen that in every region of the world the numbers of children out of school has come down, and only in one region (central Asia) were girls a larger population of children out of school in 2010 than in 1999. Concerted efforts to support girls to go to school have thus seen progress.

Statement of the Problem

The girl-child is faced with various challenges in the school environment and the society at large. As a result of this, there are gender imbalances that tend to take place among both sexes. There are various gender inequalities that preoccupies the system which ranges from violence to abuses, discriminations, bullying and so on. Even though the attainment of gender equality is not only seen as an end in itself, it is equally an end in ingredients to and a product for achievement of sustainable development of countries. (Akuezilo, 2012). Various discoveries have revealed

that gender inequality is a great challenge to Nigeria even as a developing country especially in Ilorin West and South. (Obayan, 2014). Studies also discovered that the girl-child is usually subjected to a lot of humiliation and relegated to the background. The cultural believe that the female child is inferior to the male child and that female education ends in the kitchen, is another very challenging issue that has led to gender segregation in our societies. The UN having established policies such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for the purpose of nullifying the distinction, exclusion made on the basis of sex. UN itself still encounters various problems on gender disparity. It is against this background that the researcher deem it necessary to look into gender equality in enrolment and completion of primary school girls in Ilorin West and Ilorin Southern part of Nigeria, haven discovered

that the girl-child has not been given her rightful position.

Aims and Objective of the Study

The aim of this study is to find out the gender inequality in the enrolment and completion of girls in primary school in Ilorin West and South. However, the specific objectives are to analyse comparatively the influence of gender disparity on enrolment and completion of girl's education in the primary school in Ilorin West and Southern part of Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

HO1- There is significance difference in the enrolment and completion of male and female students in primary schools in Ilorin West and South.

HO2- There is no significance difference in the enrolment of female students and quality of education provided to the selected few learners in Ilorin West and South.

HO3- There is no significance difference in the completion rate and level of segregation between male and female primary school students Ilorin West and South.

Research Questions

1. What are the differences in the enrolment and completion of male and female students in the primary school Ilorin West and South?
2. How has the enrolment of female students in the primary schools helped to improve the quality of education provided to the selected few learners Ilorin West and South?

3. How has lack of completion in Ilorin West and South contributed to social segregation of male and female students?

Methodology

In undertaking this study and obtaining an answer to the guiding research questions to be answered, the descriptive survey research design was used. The population comprised 360 primary school girls in Ilorin West and South. 10 primary schools each in Ilorin West and South were selected using the purposive sampling techniques. The respondents consist of both male and female teachers. 180 respondents each were used in Ilorin West and South (181 male and 179 female each) respectively, making a total number of 360. Out of this respondents, 357 returned the questionnaires administered and that constituted the sample for the study. Modified four-point-likert scale researchers designed questionnaire was used for eliciting the needed data from the respondents. The questionnaire items were validated by experts in the Department of Arts Education, University of Ilorin and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education to ensure its face and content validity. This is in line with Sambo (2008) who maintained that the best procedure for validating research instrument is to give it to panel of experts. A test-retest reliability method was carried out with a sample of five primary schools within Ilorin metropolis. Two week interval period was given. The scores of the first were correlated with the scores of the second using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient and reliability index of 0.68 was obtained. The questionnaire contained two sections.

Table 3: Responses on how lack of primary school completion of girls contributed to social segregation in Ilorin West and South.

N=357

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN Ilorin West	MEAN Ilorin South
1.	Most girls do not complete their primary education	160	177	10	10	3.55	3.66
2.	Females students find it very difficult to learn from their male counterparts	300	50	6	1	3.74	3.61
3.	The population which most primary schools accommodates does not give adequate representation of the larger population in the society	254	90	4	9	3.84	3.72

Table 3 reveals that the mean value of the respondents from 3.6-3.8, meaning that the fact that most girls do not complete their primary school education does not mean that the girl child is being discriminated against or segregated.

Research Question 3: How has the enrolment of female students in the primary schools helped to improve the quality of education provided to the selected few learners in Ilorin West and South?

Table 4: Responses on the quality of education provided for the girl-child in Ilorin West and South.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN Ilorin West	MEAN Ilorin South
1.	Primary schools Ilorin West and South restricts boys and girls exposure	300	40	12	5	3.90	3.86
2.	Boys are provided with educational quality superior to girls	218	79	60	32	3.61	3.12
3.	Adequate freedom is given to the boy-child to learn at his own pace than the girl-child	260	50	30	17	3.74	3.42

Table 4 shows the mean value of respondent's assessment of the quality of education provided to the girl-child ranging from 3.1 to 3.8; this is greater than the accepted mean value of 2.5. This is clearly showing that there is difference in the quality of education offered to the boy child than the girl-child.

Discussion

For education to be prioritized in the post 2015 agenda, the UN High Level Panel (HLP) report must be implemented. The HLP report gives particular attention to gender in that it identifies addressing girls and women as an important aspect of cross cutting concerns with inequalities. It also stresses the need to attend the regional and socio-economic inequalities; hence girls and women must be empowered to achieve gender equality. Violence against the girl-child must be eliminated; ending child marriage, ensuring women can own property, engage in financial transactions and participate in the public sphere politically and economically.

It was discovered in this study that the duty bearers-parents and teachers deny the girl-child her rights. For instance, parents withdraw the girls if they cannot afford school fees for their son or sons. Some parents have the money but instead, they spend on other things like bride price, compensation payments, elections e.t.c. They also keep their daughters at home to assist in domestic chores. Parents also keep their daughters at home to work for money. The teachers also publicize the names of girls whose parents have not paid school fees, embarrassing them. The teachers and the male students harass the girls.

In addition, some parents cannot buy their uniforms, most girls only have one set of uniform, hence making the girls to go to school "in rough" or "rugged" clothes.

Also, textbooks are shared by two or three students. When the girls share the books with a boy, the boys intimidate the girls and gets to take the books home. The girls end up not being able to read the lessons and do the assignment resulting to poor performance in school.

The researchers also discovered that the prevailing attitude of parents that need to be overcome is the bride price and early marriages among girls. The parents tends to marry off their daughters at the onset of the girls monthly period in exchange for the "bride price" this is a cultural practice prevalent in Africa.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government should ensure that girl-child education is given utmost priority and that our education policies should be well regulated to promote gender equality.
2. Parents and community should acknowledge and uphold the right of all children to receive a basic education.
3. There should be school plan to accelerate girl's education and there should be door to door/ village to village awareness on girl's education.
4. There should be the establishment of girls clubs, girls' school captain e.t.c.

5. There should be monitoring of students absenteeism, performance, behavior and health. Girls that have left school should be encouraged by providing them a second chance to return and counseling session should be provided in schools.
6. It is also recommended that Primary schools should have a master list of school-age girls this will enable the community leaders and advocates of girl's education to easily identify and educate parents and guardians to send their daughters to school.

Conclusion

In all, it was concluded that gender inequality exist amidst nations especially as it relates to girl-education according to the UNESCO report. Educational administrators and policy makers have also device means of educating the girl-child in all facets of life in order to avoid gender disparity and segregation among boys and girls in primary schools. As such, for the achieving of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particular attention must be placed on girl-child and women education all over the world.

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