

# **PROMOTION OF GIRL - CHILD EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: ROLE OF LIBRARY**

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**Paper presented at 2<sup>nd</sup> South West Biennial Zonal Conference Held  
on 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2014 at federal College of Education, Osiele,  
Abeokuota, Ogun State**

## **ABSTRACTS**

The paper examine girl child education has one of the major impediment to women education and development in our country.

This study addressed who is the Girl child in our society goes further 10 states the problems and state girl- child access to education and government intervention in promoting girl -child education and the role the library can play in promoting their education in conclusion public libraries should be established in rural and urban areas to reach both boys and girls, while the acquire reading materials should be girl - child friendly.

## **Introduction**

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights .1948: everyone as the right to basic formal education. Also the World Conference on Education for all held at Jomtein in Thailand in March 1990 drew attention of the world to the importance and impact of basic education. The Conference also forged a global consensus and commitment to providing universal basic education by the year 2000 (Rao, 2004).

All the 155 participating governments at the Jomtein Conference committed themselves to renewed efforts to provide primary education for all children, among other things. Education for ail has not been made a reality for girls and women. This is the area where most countries of the world have made least progress. In Nigeria the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in schools; the relative rates of dropout; the relative rates of continuation to higher levels of education have not changed much since the jomtein declaration of 1990. (National Technical Committee on Civil Education, NTCCN, 2006). According the Federal Government of Nigeria (1995), a child is anyone who is not yet an adult A girl-child is a female between the ages of 4 and 17 years (Guyit, 1997; (Amah, 2001).

Girl-child education is the education given to a female child through the formal school system for their physical, mental, social and economic well-being (United Nations education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, 1985; Kane, 1995). But in this paper girl-child education is defined as access to and continuance of formal education

In planning for girl-child education there is a need to consider access to basic education. Basic education in the context of this paper means undergoing

formal school system beginning from the pre-primary, through primary, to junior and senior secondary school levels

## **Problem of the Study**

It is against the background provided above that this paper addresses the following issues;

1. What is the access and equity in education for girls in Nigeria today?
2. What have been results of government interventions in the promotion of access to and continuance of education among girls?
3. What are the major obstacles to girl-child education?
4. What is the role of libraries in promotion the of girl-child education?

## **The State of Girl Child Access to Education**

From the data collected from the Federal Ministry of Education in 1999. The National Orientation Agency has provided the picture of access and parity or equality in education for girls (N.T.C.C.E, 2006). The literacy rate was 49% overall, but 41% for women. The indicators and protections made showed a literacy rate for women that has remained 41% and a gender parity rate of 0.59% showing the disadvantages that the female population will suffer in that regard. The situation at all levels (pre-primary to Senior Secondary School level) shows that the gender parity index has remained wide against girls. Only at the pre-primary (0.89) and primary school level (0.84) is seem a seeming narrowing of the gap but still no parity.

The table below an extract from NTCCE (2006:82) speaks volumes on the disadvantage the females suffer in access to formal education Increase for girls is noted. The Federal Ministry of Education (2006) revealed that the ratio of male to female enrolment across the Country was 1.28 to 1.0.

Again, the DBL scheme has placed a lot of emphasis on the provision of classrooms, teachers, textbooks and teacher training. Sufficient attention has not been paid to the provision of general reading materials one normally finds in a school library and to the general purpose books one should find in public libraries (Otur 2006). Moreover, no explicit provision has been made for girl-child education, except in the context of universal basic education.

### **Impediments to Girl-child education**

In terms of access to and continuation of formal education, females face a number of obstacles. Ademola (2006) mentioned cultural bias, socio-economic status of parents, poverty, lack of guidance and counseling as regards the importance of women education; religious beliefs, early marriage, child trafficking, sexual harassment and fear of giving women too much freedom which education offers as the major factors hindering female education.

Atoyebi (2005) also observed that the main reasons for low enrolment and continuation of girl-child or women education is explained by the different family roles the women play in child bearing, home making, public work and the challenges of balancing the three . In addition, the factor of gender stereotype and societal attitude toward female sex constitute barriers to women education. Simply put gender stereotype means thinking and perceptions about the sexes as to their personality and roles. Preconceived notions about men and women abound and these tend to favour boys (men) rather than girls (women), according to Adebimpe (2010).

Kisseka (1992) observes that the reluctance to educate girls among some people must be viewed. As part of gender discrimination in Nigeria Women are not seen as equal to men (Omoiya, 2008). As a result of inequality some men do not see of girl-child education. A premium of education priority is given to boy-child education (Okeke, 1996).

### **Role of libraries in Promotion Girl-Child Education**

In general, the role of libraries is to select, acquire, organize and make available learning resources. A broad understanding of the role of modern libraries has gained widespread acceptance (Crawford and Gorman, 1995). The unique function of modern libraries is to acquire, organize offer for use and preserve

publically available materials irrespective of the form in which it is packaged (Hundu, 2012)). This packaging may be in print, cassette, CD-ROM, network forms. The package ensures that when the materials are needed, they can be found and put to use. The task has become more complex as the volume and range of information available has increased (Dugdale, 1999). Also new tasks and roles have emerged; so there are traditional and newly emerging roles.

To day the concept of library has been described by several different terms such as automated library, computerized library, electronic library, digital library, crybaby, virtual library, library without walls, transformed library, complex library, Hybrid library internet library and future library (Hundu, 2012). But in this paper the conventional library as for school and public libraries is the focus. Public libraries may establish branches in the rural area. They may also have mobile library sections or library without walls (Adewale , 2001).

### **School Libraries**

According to Ekweozoh, 1989:7) a school library attempts to do one or all of the following so as to prepare both the teachers and the learners for sound education:

- i. Make available current books and other print materials for lessons and assignments.
- ii. Make available materials on current affairs to help learners enlarge their horizon.
- iii. Provide supplementary reading materials to teachers.
- iv. Train learners in proper use of the library.
- v. Encourage learners to do independent study.
- vi. Stimulate the habit of reading while in school.  
Specifically on girl-child education, school libraries should provide more materials with gender bias in favour of girls and women.

### **Public Libraries**

Most public Libraries in Nigeria are located in towns and cities. These libraries provide print and electronic materials such as reference books, textbooks,

fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, encyclopedic, picture books and audio visual materials, television, internet services. All these are for the general reader and for learners, especially senior secondary and tertiary level students whether male or female. However, most library users are men and boys.

Most of the pupils in the primary schools and students in the secondary schools are in the rural areas. The need for rural based public branches of public libraries and mobile libraries is urgent (Adewale, 2001). The libraries should be used not only as a custodian of books and other materials waiting for those who care to come and use the materials. The library should also be used to reach potential users, especially the girls and women as salesmen or insurance brokers do to reach their customers.

Material like posters, pamphlets, newspapers magazines, filmstrips, video tapes, editor and radio cassette will enhance the work of rural library in meeting the needs of their clientele - Pupils and students

The Abadina Media Resource Centre at the University of Ibadan is a part of the University Library, it provides facilities for developing listening, reading and finding skills among children among other functions (Banjo, 2002).

## **Conclusion**

The Nigerian educational policy and practice emphasize equal educational opportunities for all citizens of Nigeria at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Therefore the observed gender disparity may not be due to inequality of educational opportunities. In fact the launching and implementation of the Universal Basic education which covers primary and junior secondary schools are an attempt to equalize educational opportunities

On gender issue at the basic education level it is clear that the access of girls to formal education is lower than that of boys. The continuation is also different, to the disadvantage of girls. School library as well as the public library is not gender based in favour of girls. To promote girl-child education, there should be Branches of the public library and they should be established in the rural areas and mobile libraries should be used to reach both the boys and girls. These libraries should be girl-child friendly in their acquisition of materials.

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