

# The Impact of Culture on the Girls' Education: A Case Study of Kaduna State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The plight of girls' education remains a pressing global issue, as highlighted by the United Nations' recent publication on the International Day of Education, 2023. The UN emphasized that the world is failing 130 million girls, emphasizing that education for girls is crucial for "well-being and prosperity for all". Despite concerted efforts by governments worldwide, particularly in third-world nations like Nigeria, significant challenges persist. This study investigates the impact of culture on the deprivation of girls from education in Nigeria, with a focus on Kaduna State. This research utilized a quantitative survey method and employed both secondary and primary data, including a sample of 488 respondents from all 23 local government areas. Statistical analyses, including frequency distributions, simple percentages, cumulative frequency mean deviation, and chi-square, revealed culture as the primary factor contributing to this deprivation. The findings underscore the urgent need for Nigeria's government to implement more stringent measures to ensure compulsory education for all female children. Various recommendations are proposed to address this issue effectively.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the impact of the patriarchal ethos on the deprivation of girls' education in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Central to the patriarchal ethos are entrenched cultural beliefs and practices that perpetuate gender inequality in education. These cultural barriers stem from traditional norms impeding progress toward gender equality (Chidi, 2021, pp. 19–20; Stelter, 2018, p. 4). In Kaduna, cultural influences intersect with religious convictions, further complicating the educational landscape. The patriarchal ethos, bolstered by religious teachings, reinforces the notion of male superiority and female subservience, constraining opportunities for girls to pursue education (Eweniyi & Usman, 2013, p. 2). Kaduna's culture upholds the primacy of males in societal domains, relegating girls to subordinate roles, especially in matters of education (Isiaka & Salisu, 2017, pp. 3–4).

Previous research has attempted to understand why concerted efforts at national and international levels to promote gender equality in education in Kaduna State grapple with persistent disparities. Legislative initiatives like the Universal Basic Education Policy strive to expand access to education, yet many girls remain outside the educational ambit, particularly in Northern regions (Abbagana, 2013, p. 1; Morka-Christian, 2018, p. 84).

This research stems from a belief that the cultural roots of the people of Kaduna are the major barrier to the education of the girls'. Therefore, the study endeavours to elucidate the impact of Nigerian culture on girls' education in Kaduna State, offering insights into effective strategies to create reduced inequalities and foster gender equality in education.

The next section reviews the literature on girl-child education and gender inequality in Nigeria.



## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature on girls' education in Nigeria highlights various dimensions, including definitions, cultural influences, gender inequalities, benefits, and the current situation. Offorma (2009, p. 2) defines the girls' as a biological female offspring under parental control, legally incapable of independent decisions. Ishaku (2020, p. 9) emphasizes critical developmental stages in a girl's life, shaped by external influences such as family and community. Ibrahim (2012, p. 9) underscores the injustice faced by Nigerian girls from childhood, citing cultural burdens that deprive them of education and basic rights, these practices creates disparities and hinders gender equality in education.

However, from the literature reviewed, it has been noted that there is a done of disparity in communicating who the girls' is, unlike the UNICEF standard that states that there should be no discrimination of any sought, irrespective of gender, tribe or creed (UNICEF, 1989). This research in this light, perceives the girls' as a child just as defined by the UNICEF (1989).

Education is depicted as a transformative process by Isiaka and Salisu (2017, p. 13) and Offorma (2009, p. 2), encompassing cognitive, psycho-motor, and effective behaviors. However, gender inequality persists, as highlighted by Ishaku (2020, p. 9) and Ibrahim (2012, p. 10), with girls facing barriers to access, retention, and achievement in education. Nmadu *et al.* (2010, p. 110) reveal disparities in enrolment and drop-out rates between genders, especially in Northern Nigeria, attributed to cultural norms and early marriage.

Cultural factors, deeply ingrained in Nigerian society, perpetuate gender disparities in education. Chidi (2021, p. 20) and Alabi *et al.* (2014, pp. 396-397) underscore patriarchal structures that subordinate females, shaping attitudes towards their education and societal roles. Historical legacies, including colonial education policies favouring boys, exacerbate gender gaps (Ajayi *et al.*, 2015, p. 4; Chidi, 2021, p. 19).

Despite legal frameworks like the Child Rights Act and educational initiatives, cultural norms continue to impede girls' education. Egharevba *et al.* (2013, p. 5659) and Morka-Christian (2018, p. 6) document challenges such as early marriage and traditional practices that prioritize domestic roles over schooling. The perception of girls as second-class citizens, reinforced by gender roles and religious beliefs, further marginalizes their educational opportunities (Igbelina-Igbokwe, 2013, p. 3).

Nevertheless, education is recognized as pivotal for girls' empowerment and societal development. Ajayi *et al.* (2015, p. 2) and Ishaku (2020, p. 10) emphasize the economic and social benefits of educating girls, including improved health outcomes and poverty reduction, if the No poverty goals of the United Nations must be met, then education must be given a priority for girls and boys, there must be gender equality. Efforts such as the Universal Basic Education law and UNICEF initiatives aim to address barriers and promote girls' education (Ishaku, 2020, pp. 11–12).

In Kaduna State, recent interventions like the Adolescent Girls Initiative demonstrate government commitment to enhancing girls' education. However, cultural attitudes persist, contributing to high dropout rates despite increased access to schooling (Egharevba *et al.*, 2013, p. 5654; Ishaku, 2020, p. 8).

Many scholars study the surface level of this course, not digging deep to see how culture has already built a world in the head of even infants, they therefore proffer solutions like government policy reformation, education and enlightenment all towards the male counterparts. This research on the other hand seeks to see how the issue can be tackled from its very root, how children, families, community leaders can be enlightened towards the coming generation.

The theoretical framework guiding this research is the Gender Role Theory proposed by Eagly and Wood (1999). Gender roles are societal expectations for male and female behaviour, learned through socialization processes (Lipman-Blumen, 1984). Gender in sociology has been seen as the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females, it has to do with masculinity and femininity and what the society has said about it; it is largely different from sex, which is biological (Baligar, 2018). Lindsey (2011) particularly stresses that gender is only a product of interactions and interpretation of people in the society and it does not exist in itself. Gender roles is the primary adversary of gender equality.

The Gender Role Theory posits that from birth, children are socialized into gender-specific roles, with boys encouraged to be competitive and girls taught to prioritize relationships (Richmond-Abbott, 1992). This socialization influences various aspects of life, including the types of sports boys and girls are permitted to engage in, the toys they should play with, their reactions and actions, manner of speech, dressing, etcetera. (Bales & Parsons, 1956).

In conclusion, the literature underscores the complex interplay between culture, gender, and education in Nigeria, with cultural norms often serving as barriers to girls' educational attainment. While legal and policy measures exist, addressing deep-seated cultural attitudes is essential to ensure equitable access to education for all Nigerian children. This study therefore seeks to proffer solutions that will cause reduced inequalities in order to meet up with the no poverty and gender equality goals of the UN.

TABLE I: PERSONAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS (N = 488)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	158	32.4
Female	330	67.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age distribution</b>		
18–25	305	62.5
25–40	123	25.2
40 and above	60	12.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	289	59.2
Married	199	40.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational level</b>		
Primary	113	23.3
Junior secondary school	50	10.2
Senior secondary school	100	20.5
University	68	13.9
Drop out	90	18.4
Uneducated	67	13.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Religion</b>		
Christianity	198	40.6
Islam	263	53.9
Traditional worship	17	3.5
Did not mention	10	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3. METHOD

This study utilized a descriptive survey design within a quantitative paradigm to gather structured insights from respondents (Gay, 1992, p. 6; Nworgu, 1991, p. 68). Excluding children due to accessibility and comprehension challenges was guided by Gay (1992, p. 6).

Both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data, obtained through questionnaires; participants were random residents of Kaduna State, Nigeria, with a large range in age, occupation and educational level. The wide range was specifically selected so that there can be broad insights from different members of the societies, since it is a matter of culture. Secondary data were sourced from e-publications to complement primary findings.

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled “The Girls’ Education in Nigeria, the Impact of Culture” featuring a five-point Likert scale and open-ended questions to allow for participants to communicate their views. (Ankur *et al.*, 2015). Assistance was provided to respondents who couldn’t read or write.

Simple random sampling ensured unbiased respondent selection, with participants chosen entirely by chance. This study administered 500 questionnaires to respondents randomly across Kaduna State, however 12 of the questionnaires either got missing or were returned incomplete bringing therefore the number of validly completed and returned questionnaires to 488 which were used for the analysis.

Table I presents the personal data of respondents.

Quantitative data underwent collation, coding, and analysis using statistical software. Descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages, alongside inferential analyses such as one-way analysis of variance, were employed to address research questions and test hypotheses. Analysis was made using statistical methods, Data were organized into tables, frequencies, and percentages for further analysis.

### 4. RESULTS

#### 4.1. The Challenges of the Girls’ Education

The main section of the questionnaire discussed the challenges of girls’ education on a five-point Likert scale with this key: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 1 = strongly disagree. Table II presents the responses of participants to the questions posed.

Based on the boundary criteria for decision-making, the mean scores and standard deviation for

TABLE II: THE CHALLENGES OF GIRLS' EDUCATION

S/N	Item description	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Std. dev
1	Enrolment of boys in school is higher than girls	123	268	47	32	18	4.33	0.70
2	The education of girls is being hindered by indigenous cultural practices	179	118	78	45	68	4.70	0.49
3	All Nigerian culture and religions demand that females submit to the authority of the man	284	177	7	15	5	4.67	0.54
4	It is not so easy for the girls' to combine her house chores duties with schooling	145	136	31	98	78	3.85	0.96
5	Girls that are married or have children cannot effectively pursue their education	304	134	0	35	15	4.76	0.61
6	Parents think that educating girls to boys is a waste of resources	232	162	15	36	43	4.43	0.67
7	Preference is given to girl's early marriage than going to school	166	254	10	55	3	4.22	0.74
8	Parents/guidance engage girls to hawk and do house chores rather than schooling	278	153	20	22	15	4.30	0.75
9	Girls'ren have more to learn in their homes than in schools	193	185	17	56	37	4.26	0.95
10	Religion is a hindrance to girls' education	128	218	29	55	58	3.49	1.23
11	The Nigerian government is doing their best to enhance the girls' education	184	134	45	61	64	4.24	0.92
12	The Kaduna state government has carried out public awareness campaigns, rallies, and seminars to encourage the education of the girls'	143	166	35	77	67	4.17	0.87
13	The government interventions have been effective	212	110	23	67	76	4.35	0.45
14	The Kaduna State AGILE project has done much to encourage equal access to basic education for both boys and girls	207	141	20	66	54	4.23	0.97
15	Culture in Nigeria is stronger than government policies, especially as regards the girls' education	97	271	5	73	42	4.17	0.67

items 1–15 were above the cut-off points of 3.00, which is an indication that the respondents agreed that the girls face one challenge or another. Some of the challenges they experienced were inequality in the academic sector, cultural influence, early marriage, etc. This shows that Nigeria's educational system, particularly in Kaduna, lacks gender equality.

#### 4.2. Personal Thoughts of Respondents

This section was open-ended so that respondents could communicate how they feel about the educational state of the girls' and the solution they desire. The findings showed that many are tired of the seemingly unconquerable culture that has brought nothing but doom to the girls. They confessed that gender equality is a reality in education in Nigeria because all parties involved are stakeholders in the promotion of inequalities, especially when it comes to education.

A working-class unmarried lady voiced out thus:

TABLE III: CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN NIGERIAN CULTURE AND THE GIRLS' EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of sig	Df	X <sup>2</sup> -cal	p-value
SD	43	36.9	75.1	0.05	3	207.958	<0.001
D	73	73.8	17.2				
UD	5	110.7	-5.7				
A	271	147.6	-86.6				
SA	97	80.3	-25.7				

Note. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 17.6.

“There is still much gender inequality in Nigerian Education in spite of all steps taken by the Federal Government to give equal gender opportunity to education such as the provision of the Universal Basic Education (UBE). In most of the government schools the teachers mostly focus at the male pupils and less attention on the female because they believe that women's education ends in kitchen.” (Female/18–25 years/2023)

A sad, frustrated female respondent in the age bracket of 25–40 had this to say:

“Gender inequality in the Nigeria education is so much that many girls' that went to school find it very difficult to cope. The teacher favours the male more than the male. They attract alot of favour than the girls.” (Female/25–40 years/2023)

A young undergraduate of ABU, Zaria, affirmed that;

“I am always very unhappy anytime I see my fellow girls' not going to school because of one stupid culture or the other.” (Female/18–25 years/2023)

A female respondent also commented;

“The government should enforce that every young girl within the age of going to school goes to school and no family or culture should stop that person. There should also be public enlightenment by the government or any other social groups on the disadvantages of not sending “girls” to school.” (Female/25–40 years/2023)

A married man within the ages of 40 above wrote:

“I have a girls' she is around the age of 14 and she is going to school. I used to believe that women education ends in kitchen but because of the enlighten program I received on the football field, I changed my mind and I told myself that all my girls will go to school so that they will have a great future.” (Male/40 years above/2023)

A female respondent between the ages of 25–40 that is married and educational level is senior secondary school wrote thus:

“The best way is for the government to provide free schools for anybody who is willing to attend, especially girls. This will go a long way because most of the children that are not going to school, especially the girls, are because of poverty. My role is to continue to create awareness of the importance and benefits of going to school, especially for the girls.” (Female/25–40 years/2023)

So many other responses showed that people are tired of the limitations placed on education by the Nigerian culture. They, therefore, seek a reform that will promote gender equality in education, generally reduce inequalities between girls and boys, and ultimately lead to no poverty.

#### 4.3. Tests of Hypotheses

This research is founded on three hypotheses. The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of goodness fit was used to test the options of respondents at 0.05 significant level, and the results are presented in Table III.

#### 4.4. Association between the Nigerian Culture and Girls' Education in Nigeria

Test of hypotheses in Table III above shows  $\chi^2 = 207.19$  at  $df = 3$  and  $p = 0.000$ . Since p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 at 3 degrees of freedom, the hypothesis which states that Nigeria culture has significant influence on the girls' education is accepted. This implies that Nigerian culture has significant influence on the girls' education.

#### 4.5. Agreement between All Cultures and Tribes in Nigeria toward the Girls

Test of hypotheses in Table IV above shows  $\chi^2 = 207.19$  at  $df = 3$  and  $p = .000$ . Since p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 at 3 degree of freedom, the hypothesis which states that there is a significant agreement between all cultures and tribes in Nigeria towards the girls' is accepted. This implies that there is a significant agreement between all cultures and tribes in Nigeria towards the girls'.

#### 4.6. Influence of the Western Culture on the Nigerian Culture towards the Girls' Education

Table V shows  $\chi^2 = 221.847$  at  $df = 3$  and  $p < 0.001$ . Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 at 3 degrees of freedom, the hypothesis states the significant influence of the Western culture on the

TABLE IV: CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN ALL CULTURES AND TRIBES IN NIGERIA

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of sig	Df	X <sup>2</sup> -cal	p-value
SD	43	36.9	75.1	0.05	3	207.958	<0.001
D	73	73.8	17.2				
UD	5	110.7	-5.7				
A	271	147.6	-86.6				
SA	97	80.3	-25.7				

Note. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 17.6.

TABLE V: CHI-SQUARE TEST OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE WESTERN CULTURE ON THE NIGERIA CULTURE TOWARDS THE GIRLS' EDUCATION

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of sig	Df	X <sup>2</sup> -cal	p-value
SD	143	110.7	-32.9	0.05	3	221.847	<0.001
D	166	73.8	-67.8				
UD	35	36.9	-32.7				
A	77	47.6	-133.4				
SA	67	77	-43.9				

Note. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 36.9.

Nigerian culture towards girl education. The hypothesis is accepted. This implies that Western culture has a significant influence on Nigerian culture in terms of girls' education.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The research has discovered that it is a widely accepted cultural ideal for the girls' not to go to school, similar to what [Morka-Christian \(2018, p. 3\)](#) has affirmed in his research. Also, amid the efforts put in place, there is a large vacuum to fill to reach gender equality in education in Nigeria.

The first objective of the study was to assess the general perspective of the girls' in the Nigerian culture, and the findings of the study revealed that culture has stronger control over the girls' in Nigeria as the majority of the respondents agreed that the girls' is perceived as less because of her gender. Although a large majority of respondents are clamouring for a change for the girls', almost all respondents agreed that the girls' have more to learn at home than in school; they indirectly mean, therefore, that the girls' not going to school is ideal, she should learn house chores at home instead.

This opinion confirms what [Onyeansi \(2019, pp. 140–141\)](#) shared in his research that many indirectly or directly perceives the girls' as a property, not a person. She first belongs to her father, who is in a hurry to sell her off to her husband. She lives for others and not for herself. Thus, there is no need to have an ambition or to be educated; she is expected to be home-trained instead because, as [Morka-Christian \(2018, p. 3\)](#) rightly opined, no matter how educated she is, her place is perceived to be the kitchen and her husband's bedroom, thus she only exists to cook, serve her husband sex, give birth, take care of the children, take care of the home and repeat. This implies that the Nigerian culture sees no need for educating the girls'.

If we must then attain gender equality, reduced inequalities and no poverty as discovered, we must first unlearn the roles of the female. We must be open to gender equality to see that all sexes are equal and should be treated in the same regard; this is the only way to work towards reducing inequalities.

In this same vein, [Chidi \(2021, p. 21\)](#) shares that many parents are reluctant to invest in girls' education because they conclude that they will get married someday and become the property of their husbands. They will only bear their family name for a temporal time in contrast to the boy child who will continue to bear the name of the family till he dies. Because of this, they conclude that the boy child needs more education than the girls'. Many cultures do not consider that a woman is the family's primary caregiver, and only an educated woman, economically independent and health conscious, can care well for the family. If we want no poverty in Nigeria, the solution is to train our girls and children.

The study findings discovered some socio-cultural factors affecting the education of the girls' in Nigeria. Many respondents agreed that the female is deprived of education because her major occupation is the kitchen. Other factors realized in the course of the study include the unequal treatment given to the girls' during and after school, religious demand, early marriage, and the workload imposed on the girl that reduces her focus even when enrolled in school; all of these are socio-cultural factors that hinder the girls' education. This lends credence to [Ibrahim \(2012, p. 10\)](#), who expresses her displeasure with gender equality in the education system worldwide: "Gender inequality in education is extreme." She majorly emphasized that culture is the reason for the setback in gender parity and gender equality, especially in education.

Just as [Morka-Christian \(2018, p. 6\)](#) rightly opined, respondents agreed that so many efforts have been made by the Nigeria government through several education programmes to ensure girls' education, there are still major cases where female children are restricted from accessing education, but that culture yet prevails over them all, especially in Northern Nigeria where only four per cent of females complete secondary school and more than two-thirds of female children are unable to read or write. More than ever before, there is a need for reduced inequalities in Northern Nigeria, especially regarding education.

Moreover, as ([Chidi, 2021, pp. 23–24](#)) discovered in his study, many traditional practices in Nigeria, particularly the North, restrict girls' from having proper education, such as early marriages, early childbearing, polygamy, female genital mutilation (FGM), to mention but a few.

This validates the claims of the theory used as a framework; it clearly shows that children are trained to be who they are and what they become by the community; all indications train the female child to think, act and be lesser than the male; why? Just because she is a girl! Biology does not pose any inequality to children. Society does; until we restructure our culture, we will limit the abilities of the girls' and this way, we will never get to the "no poverty" destination we set out for. This is a clarion call for the government to restructure cultural practices to ensure policies support reduced inequalities in the educational system.

The research sought to examine whether Nigerian culture influences girls' education positively or negatively. From the study findings, it has been noticed that many are not pleased with the state of the girls' education; they therefore count culture as a negative influence on the education of the girls'. Many reported that the cultural views on the girls' have made females handicapped and unproductive. This is the primary cause of poverty in the nation; it is even clearly noticeable that the northern states that have fewer girls enrolled in schools are poorer than the rest of the country. In the words of many respondents, "culture has taken away the best part of our females" Many attest to the fact that many Nigerian females, particularly in the North, do not live for themselves. They live to fulfil a million obligations imposed on them; therefore, they live for their immediate family, their husbands and children.

The research further studied the place of the government in all of these, too. Most respondents attested to the fact that the government has played its role, making education free or cheap sometimes, creating intervention programs, and encouraging the general public to get an education to achieve quality education and no poverty in the nation. However, culture still prevails and determines many decisions. This agrees with what [Igbelina-Igbokwe \(2013, p. 3\)](#) discussed in his study, how religion, which is interwoven with culture, dictates what happens in the educational sector as well, simple things like the superior regard given to males irrespective of their age and the commandment that their female counterpart should submit to them, informs what goes on in the educational system, it affects actions and reactions towards the girls' even in schools. All these cultural limitations often make female children sceptical about education, thinking that it will not matter if they are educated or not; what matters is marriage and childbearing.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The research investigated the influence of culture on girls' education in Nigeria, with Kaduna state as a focal point. Three research questions were posed, exploring the general perspective of the girls' in Nigerian culture, cultural factors affecting girls' education, and the overall impact of Nigerian culture on girls' education. The study comprised five sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, field study, and analysis. It was revealed that culture significantly influences gender inequality in education, with cultural perceptions, beliefs, and practices hindering girls' access to formal education. The study, therefore, aimed to reform gender equality and quality education, reduce inequalities, and reduce poverty in Nigeria.

Based on the findings of this research, it is concluded that socio-cultural factors majorly affect girls' participation in education. From the general cultural perception that makes others see her as less of a human being, but just a property of a man that need not be school trained, but instead home trained to meet the needs of her husband, to cultural beliefs that place her under compulsion to act in a certain acceptable manner, she is not culturally permitted to even compete with her male counterpart in school. She should rather stay quiet and submissive and, most significantly, cultural practices that put her in no position to be in school, such as early marriages, childbearing, Female genital mutilation, male preference in the family and early community initiation into adulthood. These cultural practices do not allow for quality education of the girls' or gender equality; they deprive the girls' and squeeze out the best from them, making them of no use to society.

The major effect of the problem was discovered to be continuing poverty, as a majority of the Nigerian population is female. If females are continually deprived of education that will keep them

economically productive and socially presentable, the country will continuously go down economically. The research has therefore concluded that the country can only reach no poverty goal if they educate the female, which forms the majority of their population.

To add to this, ignorance has killed so many innocent souls. Mothers have died during childbearing, so also have children; some children die as infants, and some others die much older. All of these could have been avoided if more mothers had been educated; birth control, immunization, and proper care of children could only be communicated to educated mothers. It was discovered from the study that women will even do better in the household duties allocated to them if they are educated; they will cheer the nation to no poverty if they are given quality education.

The solution to the problem will be more intentional efforts to ensure that more girls are educated. The government has tried making education accessible, introducing laws to ensure gender equality in education and educating the general public; however, more can be done to ensure that the community complies with the government's efforts to give quality education to the girls'.

From this research, it has been discovered that the government have been intentional about eradicating gender disparity in the country, particularly in education; with the UPE and UBE schemes and even the AGILE scheme employed in Kaduna, there have been many efforts geared at educating more girls' ren. However, cultural values still prevail in the society. This case study shows a typical example of what is happening around the world. Many cultures, particularly in Africa, are patriarchal, and this influences the education of girls' ren, thereby violating their rights.

This study has also revealed that a country's education rate is indirectly proportionate to the country's economic status. This means the more educated a country is, the better their productivity level, which, in turn, betters their economic status, so if the government wants no poverty, they should give more quality education. It is recommended that the government make more intentional efforts to ensure all its citizens are educated, mainly the girls' ren. There is more that the government can do to ensure total compliance of parents, families and communities to the education of the girls'. If culture is the problem, the government must attack it from the root and bring solutions directed at the custodians of culture and dictators of cultural values.

Therefore, the government can educate the cultural and religious leaders. Seminars can be organized to instruct them to encourage their members to send their female children to school. This will be effective if the government can adequately pass the advantages of girls' education to the leaders. Nigerians love good things. If they are properly lured to see that reduced inequalities and quality education will lead to no poverty, they will buy into the idea, release their girls' ren to school and see that they finish in good standing.

The government can also do better by putting specific legislation in place to protect the education rights of the girls'. Violating children's rights should be considered a serious offence punishable by the law. This is because Nigerians have unconsciously created a culture that respects punishment over the law; therefore, if there is no severe punishment attached to a crime, they freely engage in it, just like children's rights violations. Many Nigerians violate children's rights freely because they know no one will punish them for it. If the government, on the other hand, starts taking strict measures to ensure the protection of all children's rights, especially education, starting from schools to the community and even down to the family, the members of society will comply.

Additionally, the government can introduce incentives directly to parents who educate their girls' ren. Therefore, they will engage the reward system to tackle the problem. Many Nigerians value survival above cultural values; if the government can provide a particular amount of money or gift to every family that enrolls their girls' ren on schools and sees them until they finish primary education, many parents will be forced to enrol their children just to enjoy the benefits. This may seem costly for the government, but it is an investment that will pay off for the government and its economy in the future.

The government can further impose duties on the schools, particularly in Northern Nigeria, to accommodate girls' ren and give them a fair opportunity to learn and grow. There should not be any form of criticism or partial treatment. Girls should instead be encouraged to choose school over every other option the society presents. The government should not only give the laws but also monitor schools to ensure that they follow the laws imposed on them and that nothing less than quality education is served.

Lastly, skills should be introduced to the school curriculum. This has kicked off some years back in Nigeria, but it needs to be enforced and coordinated. All schools should offer skill acquisition courses where girls and boys are trained alike. The skill training can then be gender-related, like girls learning how to cook or home management, while boys learn carpentry, etcetera. This will make the girl and her family feel she is fulfilling her cultural roles and learning to be a better home manager. At the same time, this is true; she is also learning academically and instead learning a skill that will make her economically productive. These suggestions will ensure gender equality, quality education, reduced inequalities and no poverty.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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