

# THE SOCIOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EDUCATION ON THEIR SOCIO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES: EXPERIENCE FROM YOBE STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** The paper tends to discuss the sociological evaluation of the importance of women education and their socio economic activities in Fika local government area of Yobe state, Nigeria. The paper focused on the concept of women education, the concept of socio economic development and the importance of women education in socio economic development. This study used descriptive correlation design, qualitative and quantitative approach and also the total population of 66901 and the sample size of 382 respondents while questionnaire and interview guide were used as research instruments. the study also used sample frequency and percentage techniques, means and standard deviation and the Pearson linear correlation co-efficient (PLCC) to correlate the relationship between women education and the element of socio economic development in Fika local government area of Yobe state. The finding of this study revealed that there is positive correlation between women education and their household income level, but there was no significant correlation with the overall element of socio-economic development. The recommendation of this study revealed that all effort to empower women should be directed toward educational empowerment. This is because all of the construct of women education in terms of socio-economic development have significant effect on their family and social development.

**Keywords:** sociological evaluation, women education, economic activities, social development.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Women traditionally had been regarded as inferior to men physically and intellectually (Snyder, 2006) both law and theology had order this objection. Women were long considered naturally weaker than men, squeamish and unable to perform work that requires muscular or intellectual development. Traditionally a middle class girl in western culture tended to learn from her mother example like looking, cleaning and caring for children was the behaviour expected of her when she grew up. In most pre-industrial societies, for example domestic chores were relegated to women. Leaving heavier labour such as hunting and ploughing to men (Birdsal et al, 2005).The educational imbalance against females is a well-known fact at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, and the disparities in education also affect the labour market. It's widely acknowledged that women produce the largest percentage of global wealth (UN, 2013), but that they are denied a fair share of that wealth. As a result of male dominated ownership and control of resources, the income levels and standards of living of women is tied to the decisions and choices of men. According to the U N Human Development Report for Nigeria (2013), poverty is 14% higher in women-led households as compared to male house-led households. Employment opportunities are tailored along gender lines, where women have lower opportunities of gaining employment than men.

**The concept of women education:**

Education is the process of imparting knowledge, skills and disposition to the learner, (Hanushek 2008). On the other hand women education refers to the process of improving women's life through the inculcation of desirable skills, knowledge and societal cherish, values through learning and research process (Sen 2009).

Cambridge conference on African education 1956 women education is the united concern of a people for the right upbringing of their children and the improvement of its national life.

Durkheim 1956: women education is the influence exercised by adult women generations on those that are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to arouse and develop in a child a certain number of physical and moral states which are demanded of them by both the political society as a whole and the special milieu for which they are specially destined.

Women education fosters the development of intellectual capabilities of women and increases their reasoning powers. This done through the impartation of knowledge of principle which aids the development of intellectual. In the psychomotor dimension, education promotes desirable physical development. By the large women learn to appreciate those practices and habit that can lead to enviable status of physical health. The effective dimension of women education is concern with the building of right attitude, values and norms.

Women education is the catch all term for a complex set of issues and debate surrounding education.(primary education, secondary education, tertiary education and health education in particular) for girls and women. It includes areas of gender education and access to education and its connection to the alleviation of poverty. Also involved are the issues of single sex education and religious teachings on education have been traditionally dominant are still highly relevant in contemporary discussions of educating female as a global consideration (Klasen 2013).

One study has shown that an educated girl will invest 10-20 times more income back into her family and community than a man would. Girls who receive an education marry at an older age, have fewer children, and are more likely to seek health care for themselves and their children. Even so, nearly 250million adolescent girls live in poverty. Today, fewer than two percent of every international development dollars goes girls the very people who have the capacity to make an impact on ending poverty. As long as girls remain invisible, the world misses out on a tremendous opportunity for change (Levine et al, 2013).

Better lives for girls mean better lives for everyone in their communities – their brothers, fathers, future husbands and sons. When you improve a girl's life through education, health, safety and opportunity, these changes have a positive ripple effect Levine, et al. (2013).

As an educated mother, an active, productive citizen and prepared employee, she is the most influential force in her community to break the circle of poverty.

Feminist movement has certainly promoted the importance of the issues attached to female education; the discussion is wide ranging and by no means narrowly defined. It may include for example Aids education, universal education, meaning state provided primary and secondary education independent of gender is not yet global norms, even if it is assume in most developed countries. In some western countries women has surpassed men at many levels of education. For example in the united states in 2005/2006, women earned 62% of associate degrees, 58% of bachelor's degrees, 60% of master's degrees, and 50% of doctorates (Dollar and Gatti, 2013).

Education for women with handicaps has also improved. In 2011, Guisi Spagnolo became the first woman with Down syndrome to graduate college in Europe (she graduated from the University of Palermo in Italy). Improving women education levels has been demonstrated to have clear impacts on the health and economic future of the young women, which in turn improves the prospects of their entire community. In the poorest countries of the world, 50% of women did not attend secondary school. Yet, research shows that every extra year of school for girls increases their life time by 15%. Improving female education, and thus the earning potential of women, improves the standard of living of their own children, as women invest more on their income in their families than men do (king and hill, 2013).

According to Klasen 2013, in African countries, such as Burkino Faso, girls are likely to attend schools for such basic reasons as a lack of latrine facilities for girls.

Recent research in human development has established a strong link between women's education and socio-economic development. Women's education is one of the major explanatory variables behind the rate of socio-economic development (Klasen 2013). And has been shown to have a positive correlation with both. According to notable economist Lawrence Summers, investment in higher levels of education for girls may well be the highest return investment available in the developing world.

#### **Effects of women education on economic development:**

Both individuals and countries benefit from women's education. Individuals who invest in education receive a net monetary gain over the course of their lifetime Dollar and Gatti (2008). According to Harry Patrinos, lead education economist at the World Bank, the profitability of education, according to estimates of private rate of return, is indisputable, universal, and global. The principle holds particularly for women, who can expect a 1.2% higher return than men on the resources they invest in education. Providing one extra year of education to girls increases their wages by 10-20%. This increase is 5% more than the corresponding returns on providing a boy with an extra year of schooling.

This individual monetary gain creates an increase in the overall economic productivity of a country. Girls are underrepresented in schooling, meaning that investments aimed specifically at educating women should produce bigger dividends. Although investment in women's education is not present everywhere, David Dollar and Roberta Gatti have presented findings that show that this decision, along with other failures to invest in women are not "an efficient economic choice for developing countries" and that "countries that under-invest grow more slowly. Looking holistically at the opportunity cost of not investing in girls, the total missed GDP growth is between 1.2% and 1.5%. When looking at different regions, it is estimated that 0.4-0.9% of the difference in GDP growth is accounted for solely by differences in the gender gap in education. The effect of the educational gender gap is more pronounced when a country is only moderately poor. Thus the incentive to invest in women goes up as a country moves out of extreme poverty.

In addition to total economic growth, women's education also increases the equitability of the distribution of wealth in a society. Increased women's education is important for achieving this as it targets the impoverished women, a particularly disadvantaged group. There is also evidence that lower gender disparity in educational attainment for a developing country correlates with lower overall income disparity within society.

#### **Effects of women education on social development:**

According to Klasen (2013) women's education leads to significant social development. Some of the most notable social benefits include decreased fertility rates and lower infant mortality rates, and lower maternal mortality rates. Closing the gender gap in education also increases gender equality, which is considered important both in itself and because it ensures equal rights and opportunities for people regardless of gender. Women's education has cognitive benefits for women as well. Improved cognitive abilities increase the quality of life for women and also lead to other benefits. One example of this is the fact that educated women are better able to make decisions related to health, both for themselves and their children. Cognitive abilities also translate to increased political participation among women. Educated women are more likely to engage in civic participation and attend political meetings, and there are several instances in which educated women in the developing world were able to secure benefits for themselves through political movements. Evidence also points to an increased likelihood of democratic governance in countries with well-educated women.

There are also benefits relating to the woman's role in the household. Educated women have been found to experience less domestic violence, regardless of other social status indicators like employment status. Women with an education are also more involved in the decision-making process of the family and report making more decisions over a given time period. In particular, these benefits extend to economic decisions. Besides the intrinsic value of increasing a woman's agency, having women play a more active role in the family also brings about social benefits for family members. In a household where the mother is educated, children and especially girls are more likely to attend school. In households where a mother is not educated, adult literacy programs can indirectly help to teach mothers the value of education and encourage them to send their children to school. There are also a number of other benefits for children associated with having an educated mother over an educated father, including higher survival rates and better nutrition.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design:

The study employed a description correlation design, because it is interested in testing the relationship between the importance of women education and socio-economic development. It also employed qualitative and quantitative approaches because data was collected and analysed in both qualitative and quantitative means.

### Research population:

The research population will include women's group within Fika local government area. According to 2006 population census, Fika had the population of 66901 women from this population, the study focused on various categories such as women's political leaders, cultural leaders, as well as members of the civil society. It was from this that the sample size was selected.

### Sample size:

The sample for this study consisted of 382 respondents chosen from among the various clusters of people (political leaders, religious leaders, cultural leaders as well as members of the civil society). The respondents were chosen because of their vast knowledge and familiarization with the situation on ground in the area of study. The researcher used the krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table.

**Table 1.0: Sample selection table**

Category	Population	Sample
Political leaders	100	60
Religious leaders	100	60
Cultural leaders	100	60
Civil society members	100	60
FOMWAN officials	200	142
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>382</b>

### Sampling procedure:

Considering the large number of the research population, the researcher used stratified and simple random sampling techniques to select the required sample for the study. stratified sampling was used to select the respondents from among the various clusters, and then simple random sampling was used to select respondents because, using this method everybody had an equal chance of being selected for the study, thereby allowing the researcher to minimize bias in sample selection.

### Research Instruments:

The researcher used researcher made- questionnaires on importance of women education and socio-economic development. The questionnaire was closed ended questions relating to the topic of study. The interview guide collected data mainly from key informants and other respondents who were illiterate. An interview guide is a data collection technique that involves oral questioning of respondents either individually or as a group.

### Data analysis:

In analyzing the data, the information obtained was re-arranged, coded according to the type of information .The researcher used a simple frequency and percentage techniques, the mean and standard deviation to analyze the personal data of the respondents. This study also used Pearson's linear correlation co-efficient (PLCC) to correlate the relationship between women education and socio-economic development of women in Fika local government Yobe state, Nigeria.

**International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences**

 Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp: (6-12), Month: January - February 2019, Available at: [www.noveltyjournals.com](http://www.noveltyjournals.com)
**Table 1.1: Category of respondents by age bracket**

Age brackets	Frequency	Percent
Below 20 years	68	17.8
20-39	157	41.0
40-59 years	113	29.5
60 and above years	44	11.5
Total	382	99.7

Source: field study

**Table 1.2: Category of respondents by education level**

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	35	9.5
Secondary	119	32.2
Certificate	61	16.5
Diploma	83	22.5
Degree	43	11.7
PGD	20	5.4
Masters	8	2.2
Total	369	100.0

Source: Field study

**Table1.3: Distribution of respondents by parental status**

Parental status	Frequency	Percent
Both parent	126	41.0
Only father	101	32.9
Only mother	80	26.1
TOTAL	307	100.0

Source: Field study

**Table 1.4: Distribution of respondents by marital status**

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Married	125	33.2
Single	124	32.9
Divorced	63	16.7
Separated	19	5.0
Widowed	46	12.2
Total	377	100.0

Source: Field study

**Table 1.5: Description of the extent of women education**

Women education	mean	SD	interpretation	Rank
Ability to select courses of their best interest	2.97	1.068	High	1
Ability to complete college/university courses enrolled for	2.80	.980	High	2
Ability to complete the secondary level of education	2.59	1.037	High	3
Ability to complete the primary level of education	2.40	.958	Low	4
Ability to study and pass well all art courses	2.33	.953	Low	5
Ability to study and pass all science courses	2.19	.995	Low	6
Ability to study and pass well all science subjects	1.91	.967	Low	7
Ability to study and pass well all arts subjects	1.89	.996	Low	8
Average mean	2.38	.511	Low	

Source: Field study

**Table 1.6: Pearson's correlation for women education and socio-economic development**

Variables co related	R- Value	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on Ho
Women education Vs. House hold income	.124	0.018	Significant correlation	Rejected
Women education Vs. standard of living	.038	0.474	Insignificant correlation	Accepted
Women education Vs, overall socio-economic development	0.87	0.109	Insignificant correlation	Accepted

Source: Field study

### 3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding of this study revealed a positive significant correlation between women education and their socio-economic development in Fika local government area of Yobe state, but there was no significant correlation with the overall socio-economic development. These findings are in agreement with several other researchers on women education; for example, Amatyasen (2009) indicated that there is a direct relationship between women's education and socio-economic development and if more women acquire education the inequality between men and women reduces and yet it has been argued that gender discrimination is a hindrance to socio-economic development. The findings are also in line with what is indicated by World Bank (2013) indicated that achieving quality of education is a pre-requisite to achievement of other development indicators. Gender inequality reduces with increased socio-economic development, for which men and women benefit. According to klasen (2013) women education is a major explanatory variable of socio-economic development and has a positive correlation with it. Hanushek (2008) indicate that investing in higher levels of education for girls has got a highest return for developing countries is likely to benefit from women education. Since education has been proved to be an investment and a catalyst of economic development.

### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Women education in general has got a significant predictive strength over socio-economic development. An increase in women education in general will always increase the speed of socio-economic development in their family and the opposite is true.

### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, this section presents the recommendation as discuss in the previous section.

All effort to emancipate women should be directed towards educational empowerment. If there is any other kind of emancipation, then it should come after education empowerment.

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