

# Factors Influencing Parental Attitudes towards Girl-Child Education in Sokoto South Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** - This study examined factors influencing parental attitude towards girl-child education in Sokoto South Local Government Area of Sokoto state, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised to guide the study which are: to what extent does religious beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girl child education, to what extent does cultural beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girl child education and to what extent does socioeconomic status influence parents' attitude towards girl child. The population of the study involved parents and out of school girls in Sokoto South Local Government Area. Snow ball sampling technique was used in selecting the parents of out of school girls. One hundred and forty respondents (parents and girls) formed sample for the study. A self-developed questionnaire named Parental Attitude And Girl-Child Education Questionnaire (PAGEQ) was used for data collection. A reliability of 0.76 and validity of 0.88 was established for PAGEQ. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were used to analysis the data generated. Findings of the study;  $p = 0.001, 0.007 \text{ \& } 0.00 < 0.05$  revealed that the three factors examined are factors influencing parental attitude toward girl-child education. However, religious belief appears to be the strongest contributing factor in the prediction of parental attitude towards girl child education with a standardized coefficient beta of  $0.21 = 0.007 < 0.05$ . Based on the findings, recommendations were made. It was recommended that the government should empower parents who were handicapped by poverty in order to enable them have capital to purchase instructional materials for their children. It was also further recommended that both the government and religious leaders should carry out awareness and sensitization programs in order to let the parents know the importance of girl-child education in the area.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### *Background to the study*

The importance of education to human beings cannot be overemphasized. Education is a human right that should be accorded to all human beings solely by reason of being human. The relationship between education and development is well established such that education is a key index of development. It has been documented that schooling improves productivity, health and reduces negative features of life such as child labor as well as bringing about empowerment

(UNESCO, 2002). This is why there has been a lot of emphasis particularly in recent times for all citizens of the world to have access to basic education.

The importance and linkage of education to the development of any society is well known. It is in recognition of this importance that the international community and governments all over the world have made commitments for citizens to have access to education. Meanwhile, it has been documented that across the globe, there are inequalities in educational access and achievements as well as high levels of absolute educational deprivation especially in children (Sbrahmanain, 2002). Girls constitute the largest population of illiterate children in the world till date (Otive, 2006). The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated that every person has a right to education. In 1990, the world Conference on Education For All declared among others that every person shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs.

The girl-child is a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen (18) years of age. This is the age before one becomes young adult. This period covers the crèche, nursery or early childhood (0 – 5 years), primary (6 – 12 years) and secondary school (12 – 18 years). During this period, the young child is totally under the care of the adult who may be her parents or guardians and older siblings. It is made up of infancy, childhood, early and late adolescence stages of development. During this period, the girl-child is malleable, builds and develops her personality and character. She is very dependent on the significant others, those on whom she models her behaviour, through observation, repetition and imitation. Her physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional developments start and progress to get to the peak at the young adult stage. Education is the process of providing information to an inexperienced person to help him/her develop physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, politically and economically. That is why at graduation ceremonies one hears the Vice-Chancellors pronounce these words while awarding degrees to their institutions' graduates, "you have been found worthy in character and learning Grace, C. O. (2009).

In realization of the importance of the girl child, concerted efforts are being mounted by the governments at various levels to improve female participation in education and redress the gender inequalities in education enrollment and retention. UNICEF's long-term goal is for all the children to have access to complete and have a quality education. The international goals connected to girls' education include Millennium Development Goals, World Fit for Children Goals and Dakar Goals (World Education Forum). However in a global view, for instance in Tajikistan, girls have unequal access to education to secondary schools, as evidenced by their lower participation rates, lower completion rates and lower levels of achievement. The gender imbalance is especially prevalent at the upper level of secondary schools, where the overall girls' attendance rate declined from 49 per cent in 1991, to 38 per cent in 2001 (Ministry of Education 2005). Recent studies have found that there are significant differences in enrollment in secondary school education between girls and boys all over the world (UNICEF, 2007a). According to MDG needs assessment report, the number of students in general secondary education will increase by 40 per cent between 2005 and 2015 (UNICEF, 2007a). The 2003 data on poverty level assessment revealed that in cities and urban settlements, access to education above grade four decreased by six per cent for boys and 18 per cent for girls, compared to 4 per cent for boys and 7 per cent for girls in rural areas (MOE Tajikistan, 2005a)

In Nigeria, several steps had been taken since independence to promote women's education, yet enrollment of girls remains poorer than that of boys. For example the National Policy in 2000 emphasized the need for women education. The goal was the full integration of women into the social and political status as a means of developing the nation's human resources for national economic growth. Its objectives included the promotion of gender mainstreaming into all policies and programs. In addition, in 2007, the National Policy on Gender was adopted. The policy is premised on recognition of gender issues as central to and critical to achievement of the goals and objectives of national development. Education, formal or non-formal has been seen as the foremost agent of empowerment. It is the bedrock of women empowerment.

Parents' positive attitude towards child's education is important in determining school attendance and academic achievement of the child. Favorable attitude towards schooling and education enhances parental involvement in children's present and future studies. Parent's attitude towards their children's education is affected adversely by low socio-economic status, religious practices, and cultural belief of the people (Oyitso & Olomukoro, 2012). Parental attitude is a measure or an index of parental involvement. One of the most important attributes of parental attitude is consistency. As children mature into adolescence, family involvement in their learning remains important. Less enrollment of girls (15%) in the past few decades in the northern part of Nigeria, particularly in Sokoto state requires an investigation into

different factors which are affecting overall situation of girls' education. With a male population of over 1,863, 713 and 1,838,963 female, 60% of Sokoto states' illiterates are believed to be women (UNICEF, 2007). In most of the schools visited by LEADERSHIP SUNDAY (2008) within and outside the metropolis, the percentage of female enrollment compared to that of the male counterpart was so pathetic with some classes within the rural areas recording few female pupils. In the Gender Parity Index (UBEC, 2010), Sokoto state has a gender parity of 0.71, meaning that there are more boys than girls enrolled in schools.

A major deterrent to parent attitude towards girl-child education through educational opportunities is a near universal fundamental cultural bias in favor of males (Alabi & Alabi, 2014). The widespread operation of patriarchal systems of social organization; of customary early marriage; of the incidence of early pregnancy; of heavier domestic and subsistence duties of females, all combine though differentially in each case, to adversely affect the participation of girls and women in formal education. The effect of these factors can only be overcome by a profound change of attitude on the part of the influential parents (Nnoro, 2006). Together with the fundamental socio-cultural bias in favor of males, the economic factor, especially in terms of grinding poverty and hunger, is probably the most influential factor affecting parents from sending their female children to school. In such harsh economic circumstances, both direct and hidden costs to a family of sending daughters to school are perceived by parents to be prohibitive in terms of the provision of books, paper and uniforms/clothing as well as the loss of vital help at home and on the land. Because of the patriarchal predominance, investment in a girl's schooling is wasteful since it benefits the family into which a girl marries rather than her own (Dills, 2006).

The enrolment of children in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions also demonstrates discrimination against females. There are remarkable disparities according to regions and states. However, gender disparities are common in all regions and states. In all the states and regions of Nigeria, women lag behind men in access to education. For instance, only 7.6% of women interviewed in the Northern part of Nigeria had some primary education, whereas, in the Southern part of Nigeria, at least 25.9% received some education. In the case of primary school enrolment, only 12% of female children of school age are registered in the primary schools. In the South, 44.4% of girls are in primary schools Adedibu, M. A. and Adepoju, T. L. (2008)

Much has been said about the influence of parent socio-cultural belief on girl-child education. Most of the above beliefs occur in Sokoto state particularly in Sokoto South local government. Many parents in Sokoto South local government still have the cultural belief that educating a girl is a waste of time and that western education may impose negative attitude on the girls. Studies such as Jane (2008) indicate that socio-

cultural factors and patriarchal norms impact on girl-child education.

In Sokoto South Local government Area of Sokoto State study shows that there are 67 primary schools with total number of students 32,306 among them female have the low percentage of 12,128; which is 38 per cent while male are 20,178, (Ministry of Education Sokoto, 2010). This indicates that there is low enrollment and retention of girls-child in the area compare to the male students. Parents' attitude is a central point in these circumstances which can play the role of change agent. Parents' attitudes and behaviors reflect the cultural and social picture of this study and hence this study will therefore be carried out to deeply explore the mind-set of parents towards the education of their daughters in order to examine the barriers and weak points of the phenomenon.

#### *Statement of the problem*

Ideally, it is expected that every child should have equal right to education. It has been documented that schooling improves productivity, health and reduces negative features of life such as child labor as well as bringing about empowerment (UNESCO, 2002). It is really needed to educate both male and female, who can face all challenges of present technological era. However, lack of education especially female education is most significant factor contributing to underdevelopment of Nigeria (Nigerian planning commission, 2010). Nigeria is a developing country facing many problems in education system including higher rate of illiteracy of its population especially the female population. This problem is rooting various other problems also. Gender biased-education is receiving much emphasis at present. As a result of lower educational level and fewer opportunities for female participation in social life, women face inequalities and difficulties in every phase of their life. Remi, A.() it is obvious that gender and literacy go hand in hand in determining the problems faced by the target schools in Sokoto metropolis. It is obvious that there is gender disparity in these schools and factors responsible for this are: societal, environmental, psychological, religious and more. Put together, these two hamper learning in general in the target schools.

Sokoto state being predominantly Muslim community it is expected to adhere to the common Hadith of Islam which states that train a boy and you train a person but train a girl and you train a nation but according to UNESCO (2002), female education has particularly been neglected in this part of the country. For instance the net enrollment of girls is 15% compared to 59% boys in the state (UNICEF, 2002). Moreover, according to Akyeampong (2009) parents are the pioneers in the field of general and specific instructions of their children. Family traditions, customs and beliefs have been an everlasting impression upon the mental disposition of

the children's behavior and attitude. Parent's attitude is important for sending their children to school, because a child is living with them and he or she has to obey parents' orders especially in Nigerian society. Statistics, such as UBEC (2010) statistics have indicate glaring imbalances against girls in enrollment, attendance and completion rates in all levels of education in Sokoto state, due to a variety of socio-cultural and religious factors. The statistics shows that the Gender Parity Index in Sokoto state is 0.71, indicating the low enrollment of girls in the state.

Studies by Houtenville and Conway (2008) and Canon(2011) have indicated that parents' involvement towards the education of their children have a significant effect on their children educational aspirations and strongly raises children's achievement and minimizes dropout. As posited by Akyeampong (2009), Socio-economic support and interest from the parents' perspective may have a great deal of influence on female children participation and level of success attained in education. Akyeampong further asserted that female students' education from the parents' perspective is mainly influenced by traditional beliefs regarding the ideal roles of female students in society. In developing countries,

#### *General Objective of the Study*

The main objective of this study was to examine the factors contributions to parent attitude towards the education of girls in Sokoto South local government Arera, Sokoto state, Nigeria,

#### *Specific Objectives of the study*

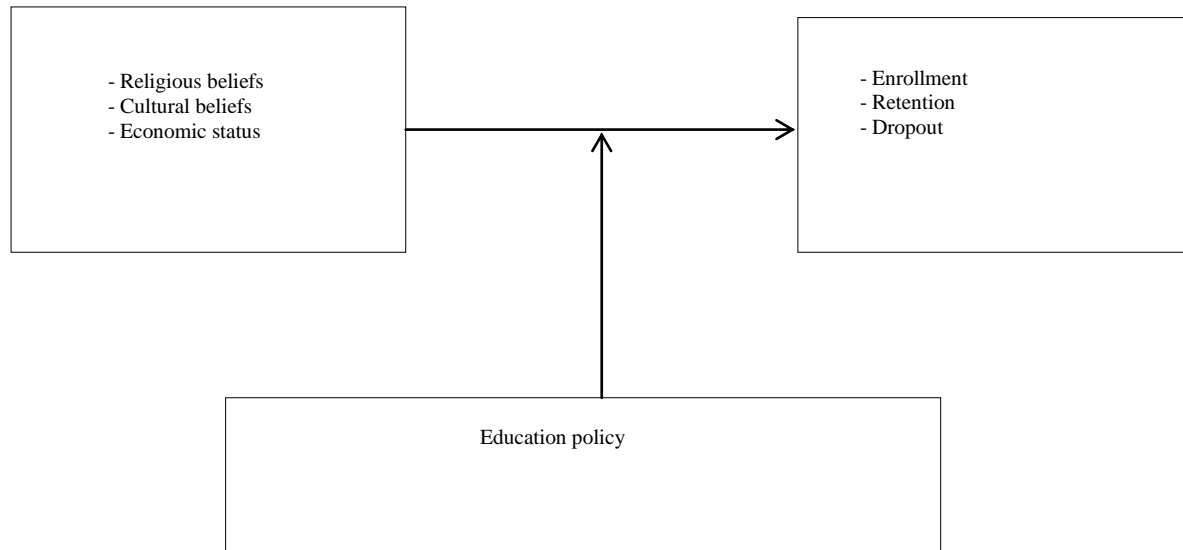
1. To establish the extent to which religious beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girl child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria.
2. To establish the extent to which cultural beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girl child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria.
3. To establish the extent to which economic status influence parents attitude towards girl child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria.

#### *Research Questions*

1. To what extent does religious beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girl child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria?
2. To what extent does cultural beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girl child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria?
3. To what extent does economic status influence parents' attitude towards girl child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria?

## Conceptual framework

### Factors affecting parent attitude



The conceptual framework above presented religious belief, cultural belief and socioeconomic status as major factor that could be affecting parent attitude towards girl-education and factors such as girl-child enrollment, retention and dropout rate as the dependent variables. It is assumed that parent's religious belief for example may affect the enrollment/retention of their children in schools. The intervening variable plays invisible role between the independent and dependent variable. Hence education policy such as mode of dressing for girls may contradict religious belief of parents and as such impact on their enrollment and retention of their wards in schools.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was a cross-sectional survey design. This design was concerned with finding, describing and interpreting a phenomenon within a cross section of respondents of the same population (Amin, 2005). The design was not aimed at discovering new phenomena, but was concerned with conditions or relationship that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of view, or attitudes that were held. The design was considered appropriate for the study because the researcher does not have any intention to manipulate the study's variables but to study them as they occur naturally.

### Population of the Study

The population of this study covered parents and out of school girls in three different areas of Sokoto South Local

Government, the study population is estimated to be 1,121 respondents made up of 756 girl-child and 365 parents.

### Sample size and Sampling Technique

In the course of this study, the sample involved parents and out of school girls from the above areas. In order to choose the participants of the study, the snowball sampling techniques was used. The Snowball sampling technique was employed to select parents of girls who were seen hawking during school hours upon inquiry it was realized that they were dropout or not enrolled in school. This sampling technique enabled the researcher to select 70 out of school girls and these eventually their parents.

## III. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The instrument that was used to collect data for this study was a self-developed close-ended questionnaire titled, "Parental Attitude and Girl-Child Education Questionnaire (PAGEQ)". The questionnaire was divided into two sections; A and B. Section A contained questions on the demographic features of the respondents while section B contained questions on the factors influencing parental attitude towards girl-child education with focus on religious belief, cultural belief and socioeconomic status. In the questionnaire item, a check list was employed where the researcher listed all possible factors for each of the research question above.

### Validity of research instrument

The validity of the research instrument was determined by experts in the field of study. A sample of the instrument was presented to experts in the field of study for professional corrections and comments which was incorporated into the



final draft of the instrument to ensure face and content validity. Thereafter, Content Validity Index (CVI) established on the instrument which determined its validity. The content validity index revealed a validity index of 0.88 as indicated below.

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Total item declared valid}}{\text{Total number of items}}$$

$$CVI = \frac{19}{22}$$

$$CVI = 0.86$$

*Reliability of Research instrument*

To establish reliability for the study, a pilot test was conducted where few of the questionnaires were given to a sample of the respondents who were not among the participant for this study but were within the population. The data collected was subjected to Cronbach Coefficient Alpha test in the SPSS statistical package to determine the reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability test; table 3.1 below revealed a reliability statistics of 0.76 implying that the instrument is 76% reliable. .

Table 3.1 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	
.763	4

*Procedure for data collection*

After receiving an introductory letter from the Dean of the faculty of education Islamic University in Uganda, the research instruments were distributed to the respondents who were already identified as out of school girls and their parents in the area of study for them to respond and the questionnaire were collected back.

*Procedure for Data Analysis*

Data collected on the demographic features of the subjects was presented in contingency percentage tables and subsequently interpreted respectively. During the collection of data from the respondents the researcher interpreted the questionnaire item to the respondents for easy understanding; other data generated from the respondents’ responses to the questionnaire items was used to analyze the research questions raised in the study. This involved descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The purpose of the regression analysis was to determine the major contributing factors in the prediction of parental attitude towards girl-child education.

**IV. DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This chapter presents analysis of data and discussion of the findings. The data analysis and discussion of findings were based on the research question of the study. This chapter was

presented in three sections: analysis of the demographic features of the participants, analysis of the research questions and the regression model summary.

*Demographic Data*

This section presented the analysis of the demographic data that is age, gender, educational level, number of children, and social class of the respondents. The presentation of the demographic data was to make a clear picture and background of the respondents in this study.

Table 4.1 Age distribution of participants (parent and girl-child)

Designation		Frequency	Percent
Parent	31-40	25	35.7
	41-50	20	28.6
	51-above	25	35.7
	Total	70	100.0
Girl child	9-11	26	37.1
	12-15	44	62.9
	Total	70	100.0

Source: field data

Results presented in table 4.1 revealed that 25(35.7%) of parents are between the ages of 31-40 while 20(28.6%) are between the ages of 41-50. Others are between the ages of 51-above (35.7%). This suggests that majority of the parents are above 30 years of age. On the part of the girl-child, 26(37.1%) were between the age of 9-11 while a high percent of the girls are between the age of 12-15. This suggests that on average, girls who are not enrolled or drop out from school are between the ages of 12-15 years of age.

Table 4.2 Gender distribution of the parents

Designation		Frequency	Percent
Parent	MALE	47	67.1
	FEMALE	23	32.9
	Total	70	100.0

Source: field data

Results presented in table 4.2 revealed that 47(67.1%) of the parents that participated in the study are male while 23(32.9%) are female. This suggests the fact that male parents are responsible for their children education.

Table 4.3 parents’ educational level

Designation		Frequency	Percent
Parent	NONE	35	50.0
	PRIMARY	22	31.4
	SECONDARY	13	18.6
	Total	70	100.0

Source: field data

Table 4.3 revealed that a very high percent of the parents (50%) are not educated while 31.4% have primary school certificates. Fewer number 13(18.6%) have secondary school certificate. This may have effect on the parents' attitude towards educating their girls. Parents with lower educational level or illiterate parents may not see any value in educating their girls.

Table 4.4 Parent distribution by social class

Category		Frequency	Percent
Parent	HIGH	2	2.9
	MIDDLE	23	32.9
	LOW	45	64.3
	Total	70	100.0

Source: field data

Result presented in table 4.4 revealed that a very high percent (64.3%) of the parents are from low social class while fewer percent (45%) are from middle class. Only 2(2.9%) of the parents are from high social class. This may have a negative effect on the parent's attitude towards educating their girls.

Table 4.5 Parent number of children

Category		Frequency	Percent
Parent	1-5	42	60.0
	6-10	22	31.4
	11 and above	6	8.6
	Total	70	100.0

Source: field data

Results presented in table 4.5 revealed that majority of the parents (60%) have between one to five children while few (31.4%) have between six to ten children. On the other hand, very few parents (8.6%) have between 11 and more children. This may negatively affect parents' attitude towards girl child education. Parents with large number of children may opt not to send their female children to school especially with the presence of the male children.

*Analysis of Research Question*

*Research Question 1: To what extent does religious beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girl child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria?*

This research question focused on analyzing religious belief as a factor affecting parental attitude towards girl-child education. Data based on this research question was collected (from parents and girl-child) through questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics as was indicated in table 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9 below.

Table 4.6 Girl-child education is against my religion

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	57	81.4
Girl-child	60	85.7

Source: field data

Result presented in the table above 4.6, revealed that 57(81.4%) of the parents emphasized that girl-child education was against their religion. In the same view, 60(85.7%) of the girls highlighted that this factor contributed to their parents' negative attitude towards their education. This therefore implies that some parents still believe that educating a girl is against their religion.

TABLE 4.7 There is mix of opposite sex in schools and my religion disallowed it

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	57	81.4
Girl-child	62	74.3

Source: field data

Table 4.7 revealed that 57(81.4%) of the parents accept that the mix of opposite sex in schools prevent them from enrolling their girls in school. This was supported by 62(74.3%) of the girls. Findings of this study contradicted the findings of Yusuf (2010), which revealed that majority of secondary schools in Sokoto state metropolis are single-sex school. However, Yusuf (2015) stressed that mix of opposite sex in schools can produce negative attitude on parents towards enrolling their girls in modern schools due to their religious belief.

TABLE 4.8 Girl-child education is corrupting the female children

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	56	80.0
Girl-child	59	84.3

Source: field data

Result presented in the table 4.8 revealed that 56(80%) of the parents stressed that girl-child education is corrupting their children. This was supported by the girls where 59(84.3%) of the girls highlighted that their parents have negative attitude towards their education because of the belief that girl-child education is corrupting their female children. This therefore imply that parents still have the belief that modern education imposes illegal behavior on the children – a factor which has produced negative effect on the parents towards the education of their girls.

TABLE 4.9 the way modern schools operate is not consistent with my religious belief

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	56	80.0
Girl-child	62	88.6

Source: field data

The above table 4.9 revealed that 56(80%) of the parents accepted that the way modern schools operate is not consistent with their religious belief. In support of this, 62(88.6%) of the

girls also accepted that their parents believe that the way modern schools operate is against their religious belief.

Results presented in the above tables revealed that parents and girls in this study see religious factors as the factors responsible for negative attitude towards sending girls to school. The above findings were consistent with the findings of Giwa and Abdulmalik (2006) who posited that many Muslim parents in the Northern part of Nigeria do fear that the enrollment of girls in western education might bring moral decadence. Findings of the study also concur with the findings of Stephen (2007) who opined that Muslim parents prefer Islamic education for their daughters for fear that western education will promote in girls values and behavior which are contrary to Islamic ethics. Furthermore, findings of the study were consistent with the findings of Alabi and Alabi (2014) who opined that majority of the parents in the northern part of Nigeria were afraid of enrolling their girls in western education owing to the fact that western education was brought by Christian missionaries. However, findings of the study contradicted the findings of Kainuwa & Yusuf (2013) who found that there was a very slow progress in girl-child participation over the years due to cultural traditions and practice of the parents. In summary, the above findings revealed that religious belief contribute to the factors affecting parents from sending their girls to school. This was due to fear of imposition of western ideology on the girls and the fear of going against Islamic religious doctrines.

This was based on the fact that all the responses were above the average percentage of the scale. This finding concurred with the fact that majority of the secondary schools in Sokoto state were based on the national curriculum of education endorsed by the western culture.

*Research question 2: To what extent does cultural beliefs influence parents' attitude towards girls child education in Sokoto South LGA, Nigeria?*

This research question focused on analyzing cultural belief as a factor affecting parental attitude towards girl-child education. Data based on this research question was collected (from parents and girl-child) through questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics as was indicated in table 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14 below.

TABLE 4.10 girl child education is against my culture

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	60	85.7
Girl-child	62	88.6

Source: field data

Result presented in the table above 4.10 revealed that 60(85.7%) of the parents emphasized that girl-child education was against their culture. In the same view, 62(88.6%) of the girls highlighted that this factor contributed to their parents' negative attitude towards their education. This therefore

implies that some parents still believe that educating a girl is against their culture.

TABLE 4.11 Disagreement among family elders

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	59	84.3
Girl-child	59	84.3

Source: field data

In table 4.11, 59(84.3%) of the parents stressed that the disagreement of the family members contributed in their negative attitude towards educating their girls. In the same position, the girls also accepted this claim. Yusuf (2015) supported this claim by revealing that majority of the parents in Sokoto state faced the challenges of family members due to their obedience. Yusuf concluded that most family elders are still governed by cultural myths and therefore discouraged their children in educating their daughters.

TABLE 4.12 Educating a girl-child is a waste of resources

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	61	87.1
Girl-child	53	75.7

Source: field data

Table 4.12 revealed that 61(87.1%) of the parents believed that educating a girl-child is a waste of resources. In support of this, 53(75.7%) of the girls also believed that this factor contributed in the negative attitude of parents towards educating their girls in modern schools. This finding concurred with the findings of Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) who revealed that majority of the parents their study believed that women will go to the houses of their husband and therefore no need to educate them.

TABLE 4.13 Women are meant to take care of household chores

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	59	84.3
Girl-child	55	78.6

Source: field data

Result presented in the above table 4.13 revealed that 59(84.3%) of the parents believed that women are meant to take care of the household and therefore should not be enrolled in schools. On the other hand, 55(78.6%) of the girls accepted that this factor contributed in the negative attitude of their parents towards their education.

TABLE 4.14 Girls are weak therefore should not be enrolled in school

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	54	77.1
Girl-child	51	72.9

Source: Field data

Result presented in the above table 4.14 revealed that 54(77.1%) of the parents believed that girls are weak and therefore should not be enrolled in schools. On the other hand, 51(72.9%) of the girls accepted that this factor contributed in the negative attitude of their parents towards their education. According to Olaitan (2013), cultural myth is still influencing parents' belief towards their girls. Olaitan concluded that in the olden days, girls are believed to be weak people and are neglected in some societies.

The above findings concur with the findings of Jane (2008) who reported that parental attitude in sending their daughters to school was worsened by cultural perceptions of girls as child minders, marriage materials and a burden to the family. The findings of the study further concur with the findings of Rufai (2006) who attributed cultural factor to various myths. Some of these include unfounded cultural beliefs that educated girls do not make submissive wives and usually carry attitudes that are incompatible with their traditionally expected roles as future wives and mothers. The findings of the study were also consistent with the findings of Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) who found that cultural belief of parents that discourage them from sending their girls to school include the belief that girl-child education is a waste of money and resources and the belief that girl-child education is against their cultural practices. However, findings of the study contradicted the findings Alabi and Alabi (2014) who opined that majority of the parents in the northern part of Nigeria were afraid of enrolling their girls in western education owing to the fact that western education was brought by Christian missionaries.

In summary, both the parents and girl-child accepted that cultural factor negatively influence parent attitude towards girl-child education. This was based on the belief that girl-child education was against their cultural belief and the belief that girl-child education is a waste of resources. Based on this fact cultural myth still plays a negative role in enrolling girls to modern schools especially in less civilized and traditional-dominated regions.

*Research question 3; to what extent does economic status influence parents' Attitude towards girl-child education?*

This research question focused on analyzing economic status as a factor influencing parental attitude towards girl-child education. Data based on this research question was collected (from parents and girl-child) through questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics as was indicated below.

TABLE 4.15, Poverty

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	42	60
Girl-child	42	60

Source: field data

From the result presented in table 4.15, 42(60%) of the parents accepted that poverty was a contributing factor

preventing parents from sending their girls to school. This was also supported by the girls where 42(60%) highlighted that poverty inhibits parents from sending their girls to school. This finding was consistent with the findings of Adeniyi (2008) who stressed that poverty was one of the factors that is preventing parents from sending their girls to school. Adeniyi concluded that due to poverty, majority of the parents preferred educating their male children.

TABLE 4.16 Educational level

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	53	75.7
Girl-child	56	80

Source: field data

Result presented from the table 4.16 revealed that 53(75.7%) of the parents believed that their educational level contributed in their negative attitude towards educating their female children. In addition to this, 56(80%) of the girls also accepted this claim. According to Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013), majority of the parents in the north east geo-political zone in Nigeria have low educational qualification. This has contributed in their negative attitude towards educating their children.

TABLE 4.1 7 Large number of children in the family

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	53	75.7
Girl-child	55	78.6

Source: field data

Result presented in table 4.17 revealed that large number of family contributed in the parents' negative attitude towards educating the female children. This was confirmed by 53(75.7%) of the parents and 55(78.6%) of the girl-child. This finding was consistent with the findings of Olaitan whose demographic analyses revealed that majority of the parents from northern part of Nigeria have more than one wife. This therefore results in the increase in number of children. As stressed by Olaitan, parents with high number of children prefer sending their boys to school than girls.

TABLE 4.18 Lack of income

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parent	52	74.3
Girl-child	56	80

Source: field data

Result presented in table 4.18 revealed that 52(74.3%) of the parents and 56(80%) of the girl-child believed that lack of income contributed in the parents' negative attitude towards girl-child education. Lack of income is attributed by low-income job among the parents of Sokoto state. According to the demographic studies of Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013), majority of the parents in north east zone have low-income



job such as subsistence farming, tailoring and other forms of menial jobs.

The above findings concur with the findings of Huisman and Smits (2009) who studied the influence of socioeconomic status on the education of female children in India. Their results indicate that most of the variation in the educational enrollment of female children is explained by factors at the household level, of which socioeconomic factors are the most important. They also emphasized that female children who were not enrolled in school came from financial disadvantaged families. They concluded that high rate of poverty at the household level have made poor either not to

enroll their female children in schools or fail to sustain an uninterrupted participation of those who are enrolled due to inability to meet various requirements. The findings of this study were also consistent with the findings of Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) who reported that poverty is indeed a barrier to female children's, particularly female student educational participation.

In order to ascertain the major contributing factor of all the factors influencing parental attitudes towards girl-child education, the data was subjected to regression coefficient analysis as presented in table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19 Regression coefficient of major factor in the attitude of parent to girl-child education

Model		Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for Beta	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.262	.082		3.208	.002	.101	.424
	SES	.137	.041	.236	3.370	.001	.057	.218
	CULTURE	.202	.073	.210	2.752	.007	.057	.347
	RELIGIOUS	.365	.063	.421	5.764	.000	.240	.491

Source: field data

Results presented in Table 4.19 explained the factors that contributed to the prediction of parental attitude towards girl-child education. From the above table, it could be deduced that the three factors are contributory factors in the attitude of parents to girl-child education with the p value of 0.001, 0.007 &  $0.00 < 0.05$ . However, religious belief with standardized coefficient beta of  $0.421 = 0.00 < 0.05$  made the strongest unique contribution in the prediction of parental attitude towards girl-child education while cultural belief with a standardized coefficient beta of  $0.21 = 0.007 < 0.05$  has the least unique contribution in the prediction of parental attitude towards girl-child education.

Each of the variables in the result above made statistical significant contribution in the prediction of parental attitude towards girl-child education ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, results revealed that religious belief made the strongest statistical significant contribution ( $p = .000$ ) in the prediction of the model. Based on the above, it therefore suggested that religious belief was a strongest contributing factor in the prediction of parental attitude towards girl-child education.

The above findings concur with the findings of Adamu (2005) who found that religious belief was the major contributing factor influencing parental attitude towards girl-child education. Findings of the study also concur with the findings of Eweniyi and Usman (2013) who revealed that religious belief was the major factor that prevent parents from enrolling their daughters in schools. They concluded that fear of conversion to other religion, and undue exposures of girls to western life are among the strongest parental belief. However, findings of the study contradicted the findings of Kainuwa and

Yusuf (2013) who opined that cultural belief was the strongest factor contributing to parental attitude towards girl-child education. The findings also contradicted the findings of Jane (2008) who revealed that culture was a major deciding factor for sending girls to school. According to her findings, some parents decided in many cultures that, education is not worthwhile for their daughters who will move into their husbands' families when they marry and that the gains in productivity or income due to education will accrue to the families of the son-in-laws rather than to them. This therefore implies that culture plays a dominant role owing to the fact that most parents are still conservatives when it comes to culture. This can also be seen in many traditionally-dominated areas where cultural myth is mixed with religious doctrines.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

Findings from the study revealed that the belief that "girl-child education is corrupting the female children" and the belief that "the way modern schools operate is not consistent with Islamic religion" was the major religious belief preventing parents from sending their girls to school. Another belief was the mix of opposite sex in schools. Findings from the multiple regression analysis revealed that religious belief made the highest significant contribution (*standardized beta coefficient = 0.421, p=0.00*) in the prediction of parent attitude towards girl-child education. This was based on the fact that Sokoto state is an Islamic dominated state. It was also based on the fact that Islamic Shari'a is practiced in the state and all its local governments. Majority of the parents in Sokoto South LGA still have the belief that western education

was brought to contradict and prevent people from following Islamic doctrines. Based on this, majority of the parents prefer to send their boys to school.

Findings from of the study revealed that cultural beliefs such as the belief that “girls are weak and therefore should not be sent to school” and the belief that “educating a girl is a waste of resource” are the most cultural factors contributing parents’ negative attitude towards educating their girls. Evidence from the literature (Kainuwa& Yusuf, 2013) has endorsed this findings by revealing that cultural belief that discourage parents from sending their girls to school include the belief that girl-child education is a waste of money and resources and the belief that girl-child education is against their cultural practices. In the multiple regression analysis, it was revealed that cultural belief made the less contribution in the prediction of parent attitude towards girl-child education. This therefore implies that culture is not major factor preventing parents from sending their girls to school.

Findings of the study revealed that poverty was the highest socioeconomic factor preventing parents from enrolling their girls in schools. Findings of the study further revealed that educational level and number of children was the least socioeconomic factor preventing parents from educating their daughters. Evidence has revealed that lack of capital and income was the major factor preventing parents from educating their children (Kainuwa& Yusuf, 2013). In the course of this study, poverty plays a negative role considering the fact that majority of the parents in Sokoto South local government are poor. This therefore inhibit parents’ positive attitude towards educating their girls. Findings from the multiple regression analysis revealed that socioeconomic status made a significant contribution (*standardized beta coefficient = 0.236, p=0.001*) in the prediction of parental attitude towards. This implies that there is a significant relationship between socioeconomic status and girl-child education.

#### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- i. The government should empower parents who are handicapped by poverty in order to enable have capital to purchase instructional material for their children.
- ii. The government should carry out a sensitization and public awareness programs in order bring parent awareness on the benefits of girl-child education in the society.
- iii. The government should also make parents to be aware that educating the girl-child does diminish the cultural value rather it promotes civilization.
- iv. Religious leaders should interpret the Qur’an verses related to seeking knowledge among the Muslim ummah. The religious leaders should also make parents be aware of the importance of educating girls

in the Islamic world as enshrined in the Qur’an and Sunnah.

#### Areas of further study

- I. The influence of family background on girl-child education
- II. The effect of parental attitude on the students’ academic performance
- III. The effect of early marriage and girl-child education.

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