Attitude of Nomadic Parents to Girl-Child Education in Mubi Educational Zone of Adamawa State, Nigeria: Implications for Counselling

Dr. Dorcas Oluremi FAREO¹, Usman Modibbo HANAFI²

¹Science Education Department, Adamawa State University, P.O Box 411, Mubi, Nigeria
²Science Education Department, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Nigeria

Abstract: The study examined the attitudes of nomadic parents to girl-child education in nomadic schools in Mubi Educational Zone. It also investigated the nature of educational provisions for the nomads. The study employed survey research design. The population of the study consists of all the 20 nomadic primary schools in the five local governments in the educational zone. The sample size of 120 nomadic teachers was chosen from ten nomadic primary schools in all the five local governments through stratified sampling technique using class, sex and locality as strata. The research instrument for this study titled “Attitudes of Nomadic Parents towards the Education of Girl-Child” (ANPEG) was self-developed by the researchers. The face and content validity of the instrument was established by two experts both in Counselling Psychology and Test and Measurement in the Department of Science Education, Adamawa State University Mubi. The reliability test was carried out in a nomadic primary school in Gombi Local Government Area of Adamawa State using test re-test method, and the reliability coefficient was 0.89. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequency counts, percentages and t-tests analysis. The findings showed that blue print on nomadic education provides equal right to education of both male and female nomads which is anchored by the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) in collaboration with states and local governments. The study revealed that nomadic parents believed that western education can convert their girls to Christians; and that girl-child education is a waste of resources, since girl-child roles in the society only ends in childbearing and cooking. The study showed the effects of nomadic parents’ attitudes to girl-child education as poor level of enrolment, high rate of drop-out, negative attitude towards girl-child education and lack of knowledge. In conclusion, Nomadic parents believed that girl-child education is a waste of resources and that there is risk of immoral behaviour of girl-child in schools. The negative attitudes of nomadic parents were as a result of their cultural belief, illiteracy and ignorance; which could lead to high rate of drop-out, lack of knowledge on basic fundamental right and poor standard of living of nomadic girl-child. The state and local governments should mount up campaign against the use of socio-cultural and religious factors as yardsticks to relegate the girl-child to the kitchen. There is also a need to establish effective guidance counselling programmes in schools right from primary school so as to encourage the female gender education.

Keywords: Nomadic parents, attitude, girl-child, nomadic educational programme, counselling.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, nomads are a group of people which migrates orderly, logically, systematically and purposefully from one particular geographical region to the other in search of their economic means of livelihood. There are three basic categories of nomads in Nigeria: the migrant farmers, migrant fisher folks and pastoralists (herdsmen). Nomadic is not a peculiar Nigerian phenomenon, Nomads are found in other parts of the world such as Europe, Asia, Tanzania, Canada, Australia, North and South America. In Nigeria, nomads are found around Cross River, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Ondo, Edo, Delta, Lagos, Abia and Imo States. The Fulani nomads (Mbororo) wander along Borno State, Benue, Taraba, Zaria, Jos, Niger, Gongola. They are present in almost all the Northern states of Nigeria [1, 2].

The nomads are usually made up of the Fulanis who happen to be the largest of all nomadic groups.
Their population is estimated at about 7 million out of the total number of 9.4 nomads in Nigeria including school age children [3, 4]. This group of nomads is found in 31 out of the 36 states of the federation. They are essentially cattle rearers known for raising animals such as camels, buffaloes, reindeers, goats and sheep. This informs why they migrate from one location to another in search of greener pastures for their flock. The pastoralists most times move with their family members including school children thereby preventing the latter from acquiring formal education in a conventional school setting. Animal rearing is seen as a status symbol among the Fulani folk and they train their children towards succession and inheritance of their company of animals.

This is another group of nomads who take to farming as their source of livelihood. They therefore leave their traditional homes to settle near available farms throughout the farming season. The migrant farmers are located all over Nigeria. In the Northern States, they are found in Katsina,

Pankshin, Sokoto, Kano, Okene. In Edo State, they are found in Auchi while in the West they can be located at Okitipupa. In Delta State Ughelli and Warri, Eastern States, nsukka and Abakaliki, Edo, Orlu, Udi, Ohaji, Ohaozara [2].

Uche, Okonkwo, Oznurnumba, and Nwagbo [5] described the migrant fisher folk as men, women, children and dependants who accompany their families to fishing ports and migrate to other conducive places as guaranteed by the season. For this group of individuals, fishing is a source of livelihood and they migrate with their family members and settle along creeks and lagoons. They are found among the Ijaws, Ijebus, Efiks and Ibibios. Etulo, Jukun and Nupe who live near river Niger and Benue are good examples. The nomadic population of Nigeria is marginalized and disadvantaged educationally. This is mainly because of their lifestyle of migrating from place to place in order to meet up with the quest for economic survival. Constant movement denies their children access to formal education [2].

UNESCO [3], Mohammed and Abbo [4], as well as Shobola, Omoregbo and Olufemi [6] report that out of 9.4 million nomads, 3.1 million are children of school age. The literacy rate of pastoral nomads is at 0.28% while that of migrant fishermen is about 20%. Nomadic education according to Adazie [7] is the provision of formal and basic functional literacy and numeracy for the children of the migrant cattle rearers, fishermen and farmers wherever they settle. In the Federal government’s effort to reduce chronic illiteracy and render free and equal sustainable educational opportunities in all Nigerians and in order to bridge the literacy gap, the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) was established by Decree 41 of December 1989.

The Commission was charged with the responsibility of providing nomads with relevant and functional basic education, knowledge and skills to help raise their productivity, levels of income and participate effectively in national development [26, 6]. They were also entrusted with the responsibility of: (a) Formulating policies and issue guidelines in all matters relating to nomadic education in Nigeria; (b) Arranging for effective monitoring and evaluation of activities of agencies concerned with nomadic education; (c) Establishing, managing and maintaining primary schools in the settlements for nomadic people; (d) Providing funds for nomadic education programmes and related activities. The NCNE, in collaboration with states, local governments and local communities, started by providing primary education to nomadic children in various states of the federation.

Adamawa State Primary Education Board [8] said that there are 75 schools for pastoral nomads in the State. The total number of enrolment in these schools is 7,230 out of which 4,383 (61.92%) are boys and only 2,847 (38.08%) are girls. This low enrolment of girls in nomadic schools can be attributed to the withdrawal of girls from schools for early marriage or engaging them in domestic chores. Mohammed [9] said some of these girls were withdrawn from school not with their consents that showed willingness, given the opportunity to further their education. Gorham [10] and Mburza and Hanafi [11] observed that in nomadic communities girls are sometimes abducted for marriage even when they are not more than eight years.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study was guided by two theories: Human Capital Theory by Becker [12] and Policy Implementation Theory by McDonnell and Elmore [13]. These two theories were complementing each other as far as this study was concerned. The need for the government to aim at providing education to its citizens is built on the premise of Human Capital Theory. This theory argues that education of citizens of a country enables them to participate in development activities through equipping them with skills necessary for building the Human Capital. Therefore, NCNE operational strategies are to create the alternative modes of formal education provision that are aimed at enhancing access to education of the marginalized nomadic pastoralist child.

On the other hand, the policy implementation theory asserts that for successful implementation of a policy, there is need to have the necessary instruments in place and in the right proportions thus, leading to enhanced educational access and consequently boosting the social economic status that is essentially required for nomads. The two theories on which this study has
been anchored have been discussed in the sections. To begin with the Human Capital Theory [12] which discussed the Nigerian government emphasis on the need for providing education to its citizens and Policy Implementation Theory [13] which outlined the components that are needed to enable effective policy outcomes.

**Human Capital Theory**

Human Capital Theory was originated from a branch of Labour Economics. Schultz [14] is the economist who introduced the concept of education as an investment by analyzing the return-on-investment which involved an analysis of the costs of education as an investment and the benefits. It is from this that Becker [12] developed Human Capital Theory. Becker viewed human capital as a means of production just like land, fixed capital and labour. He argues that, an investment in human capital leads to increased output. It is generally believed that education produces value-added citizens in terms of skills relevant to the production process and helps promote the overall standard of living in society. The concept of human capital emphasizes the fact that the development of skills is an important factor in production activities [15].

In addition, it can be argued that education is an investment where individuals and households invest in it, either directly or indirectly. The costing of education is however, estimated both in terms of money spent directly and in terms of opportunity cost. For pastoralists’ children, they require education so that they can contribute to economic development. However, the opportunity cost foregone by the children who would be expected to contribute to socio-economic development of their community through labour, is the cost on part of the community. Since nomadic parents are reluctant to finance their children education, the government and other stakeholders bear the financial cost of nomadic education. By so doing, government is investing in nomadic education in the expectation that the participation level of nomadic pastoralists in education will improve.

Conversely, the government hopes that by investing in the education of nomadic children, the expected output will be an improved human capital, due to the fact that the human resource of any nation determines its character and pace of social development [16]. This notion seems to compel any government to invest in its human capital. However, with regional disparities in terms of access to education, the pace of national economic development will not only be slow, but also, unrealized especially among the nomadic pastoralists [15]. Valuing of pastoral economy by this community makes it difficult to provide formal schooling, hence, challenging the government’s priority of promoting access to education. Yet, it is not until the pastoralists participate fully in education that addresses their immediate needs, that economic development in these areas will be realized.

The NCNE evolved operational strategies to enhance accessibility of nomadic children to education and encourage them to stay in schools till completion. When large numbers of nomadic parents enrolled their children in formal education then they not only benefit with economic development but are also able to gain social benefits such as good health, moral value and understanding of their civil rights among others. To this end, therefore, human capital as an input is control to economic development to which education is seen to be instrumental [17].

A study on human capital externalities and private returns to education in Nigeria, has asserted that provision of primary education for nomadic pastoralists will enhance their productivity, vice versa [18]. This brings us to the question of the marginalized nomadic pastoralist communities who are excluded from earlier national education plans. This explains then that the pastoralists will also benefit their economy if they are integrated and participate in education. Therefore, the central argument of this theory is that when education is accessed, it enhances development [15]. Contrary to the perception that formal education has failed to reach the nomadic pastoralists due to their socio-economic lifestyle. In this connection therefore, they are to be part of primary education level which have the highest returns to education as an investment. Consequently, NCNE strategies are a critical basis for bringing Human capital development among the nomadic pastoralists.

**Policy Implementation Theory**

This study also adopted McDonnell and Elmore [13] theory of policy implementation. This theory stemmed from desire to find a more specific model of the determinants of implementation outcomes and critical policy effects, while retaining those variables entrenched in the political and organizational context that have produced pay-off. Their aim was to find ways of shaping policy outcomes, so that, when enacted, they have long-term policy effects. They came up with the notion of policy instruments or mechanisms that translates substantive policy goals into concrete actions. Although, the government of Nigeria has made efforts to provide education to the nomadic pastoralists communities across the states, its realization needs attention. The successful implementation of such a policy is therefore pivotal. Establishing their level of participation in education through the lenses of these policy instruments is critical. In order to have education provision among the excluded nomadic pastoralists, NCNE policy is needed to be in place that can cater for their needs. Its implementation is critical for them to participate in education [15].

Implementation of NCNE policy takes different forms and shapes in the context of different
The success of the policy, it could plausibly lead to new nature of educational provision for nomadic children. The nomadic pastoralists, who have unique lifestyles and socio economic related issues, which normally affect their level of participation in formal education, therefore, there is need for the policy. The theory of McDonnell and Elmore [13] identified several policy instruments that are needed as essential components of ensuring policy implementation once it is made. These components are from both the implementers and the targeted group. It may embrace the actions of public or private individuals or groups directed towards achievement of objectives set forth in policy decisions.

These have been classified as policy instruments. McDonnell and Elmore [13] classified policy instruments into four distinct categories thus: mandate, inducements, capacity building, and transfer of official authority. Later, they improved on the four by adding dialogue and awareness. Noteworthy, these different types of mechanisms for policy implementation are used selectively and in varying combinations to produce intended outcomes. The use of each policy instrument, or their combinations, reflect various sets of assumptions and ultimately leads to different consequences [13]. This means that different policies require policy instruments of different strengths. In effect, the NCNE operational strategies must be aimed towards socio-economic, orientations, norms and cultural environment of the targeted group, with the intents of bringing this socially-distant group closer to national fold and make their contribution in National economic count (nomadic pastoralists).

Implication of Human Capital Theory and Policy Implementation Theories to This Study

The government of Nigeria has prioritized universalization of primary education as a prerequisite for economic development of the nation. This has been demonstrated through the various interventions as stipulated in most of its policies since early 70s in line with the spirit of 1999 constitution and new National Policy on Education (NPE). This was why NCNE evolved number of implementation programmes including the operation strategies. The aim was to raise the level of participation of the nomadic pastoralists' children in education. Since education as an investment is believed to equip people with skills that would make them participate in the nation economic development. Hence, the need for NCNE was to ensure provision of basic functional education through the use of operational strategies.

In addition, the externalities that are associated with education confirmed the need to promote access to education among this marginalized group despite their previous low levels of participation in formal education. On the other hand, for NCNE strategies to have the greatest pay-offs, there is need to address policy implementation instruments that capable of shaping the policy outcome. These instruments become necessary to remove any obstacles that may hinder nomadic children from accessing formal education, irrespective of their location.

Moreover, the ultimate goal of providing education is to empower the human capital and enable them to participate fully in economic development. This is in line with what the proponents of Human Capital Development theory stipulate. Policy Implementation Theory propounded by McDonnell and Elmore [13] stipulated that for successful programs such as NCNE operational strategies implementation, there must be policy instrument tools that must be set in place [19].

Statement of the problem

Nigeria as a developing country has attempted to uplift education to an acceptable level through the provision of basic and functional education to her citizens. Despite the government’s intent in providing quality and functional education at all levels to Nigerians irrespective of age, religion, tribe or gender, there is need to address policy implementation instruments that capable of shaping the policy outcome. These instruments become necessary to remove any obstacles that may hinder nomadic children from accessing formal education, irrespective of their location.

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OBJECTIVES

- Investigate the attitudes of Nomad parents on girl-child education.
- Examine the effects of Nomadic parents attitude on girl-child education.
- Determine the nature of educational provision for the Nomads.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. What is the nature of educational provision for the Nomads?
2. What are the attitudes of Nomadic parents towards girl-child education?
3. What are the effects of Nomadic parents’ attitudes to girl-child education?

Research Hypothesis
There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female nomadic parents to girl-child education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The study employed survey research design. The population of the study consists of all the twenty nomadic schools in the five local governments (Mubi North, Mubi South, Maiha, Michaka and Madagali) area of Adamawa State. The sample size of 120 nomadic teachers was chosen from ten nomadic primary schools in all the five local governments in Mubi Educational Zone. Two schools from each local government was chosen by simple random sampling technique while six teachers was chosen from each of the schools by stratified sampling technique using class, sex and locality as strata.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT
The research instrument for this study was self-developed by the researchers titled “Attitudes of Nomadic Parents towards the Education of Girl-Child Questionnaire” (ANPEGQ). The instrument comprised of four sections. Section A contained the demographic characteristics of the respondents which consist of sex, name of school, Local Government Area and Class taught Section B to D contained nineteen items. Section B contained seven items relating to attitude of nomadic parents towards girl-child education, Section C contained six items relating to effects of nomadic parents attitude to girl-child education; while Section D contained five items relating to nature of educational provision for the Nomads in the attainment of girl-child education.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument
The face and content validity of the instrument was established by two experts both in Counselling Psychology and Test and Measurement in the Department of Science Education, Adamawa State University Mubi. The reliability test was carried out in a nomadic primary school in Gombi Local Government Area of Adamawa State using test re-test method and the reliability coefficient was 0.89.

Data Analysis
Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and t-test analysis.

RESULTS
Research Question 1: What is the nature of educational provision for the Nomads?

Table-1: Educational Provision for the Nomads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>REMARK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Blue print on nomadic education provides equal right to education of all Nomads (both male and female)</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) provides primary Education to both boy and girl-child in collaboration with States and LGA</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NCNE provides adult education for the Nomads</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NCNE provides academic support services to children of Nomads in rough Nomadic Education Centre</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Development of Distance Learning Scheme using the electronic media to access the nomadic boys and girls</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table-1 revealed that the respondents agreed with all the items: Blue print on nomadic education provides equal right to education of both male and female nomads (̅ =3.22), National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) provides primary Education to both boy and girl-child in collaboration with States and LGA (̅ =3.11), NCNE provides adult education for the Nomads (̅ =3.00), NCNE provides academic support services to children of Nomads in rough Nomadic Education Centre (̅ =2.81), Development of Distance Learning Scheme using the electronic media to access the nomadic boys and girls (̅ =2.68). The findings implied that blue print on nomadic education provides equal right to education of all nomads (both male and female), National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE), primary education to both boy and girl-child in collaboration with States and LGA, adult education for the nomads, academic support services and development of Distance Learning Scheme using the electronic media to access the nomadic boys and girls.

Research Question 2: What are the attitudes of Nomadic parents towards girl-child education?
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DISCUSSION

The findings showed that blue print on nomadic education provides equal right to education of all nomads (both male and female), National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE), primary education to both boy and girl-child in collaboration with States and LGA, adult education for the nomads, academic support services and development of Distance Learning Scheme using the electronic media to access the nomadic boys and girls. The result agrees with the work of Iro, [21] Sulaiman, Samson, Nabogari, Williams and Zira [22] and who reported that to improve the literacy rate of Nigeria’s Nomads, the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) employed various approaches such as on-site schools, the, shift system”, schools with alternative intake, and Islamiyya (Islamic) schools to provide literacy education to the Nomads.

Nomadic parents believed that western education can convert their girls to Christians, girl-child education is a waste of resources, girl-child roles in the society only ends in childbearing and cooking, nomadic parents believed that there is risk of immoral behaviour of girl-child in schools, girl-child needs protection as such cannot be allowed to move freely to schools, and most of the things learnt in school are not relevant in real life situation This finding agree with the finding of Bhalotra and Heady [23], Basu, Das and Dutta [24], Sulaiman, Samson, Nabogari, Williams and Zira [22] activities is lower among low-income and minority families than other families due to feelings of alienation, distrust or a devaluation of their cultural resources.

The study revealed the effects of nomadic parents’ attitudes to girl-child education include poor level of enrolment, high rate of drop-out, lack of knowledge on basic fundamental right, poor standard of living and conservative attitudes of the nomads. This findings corroborate the study of Oniye [25] and Sulaiman, Samson, Nabogari, Williams and Zira [22] who reported that forces which combine to hamper women education, family stability and sustainable development in Nigeria could be viewed broadly to include denial of equitable access to and participation to functional education, early marriage, confinement to solitary living, subjugation by culture to accept choices forced on women, discrimination and harassment at work, political disenfranchisement from elective and political appointment and exposure to cruel mourning rites upon the death of their husbands.

The study showed that there is a significant difference between the attitudes of male and female nomadic parents to girl-child education.

CONCLUSION

Nomadic parents believed that girl-child education is a waste of resources and that there is risk of immoral behaviour of girl-child in schools. The negative attitudes of nomadic parents was as a result of their cultural belief, illiteracy and ignorance which could lead to high rate of drop-out, lack of knowledge on basic fundamental right and poor standard of living of nomadic girl-child.

Implications for Counselling

• The state and local governments should mount up campaign against the use of socio-cultural and religious factors as yardsticks to relegate the girl-child to the kitchen. The education of the girl-child should be as important as that of the boy-child if not more important as peoples’ opinion assert that when a woman is educated, a nation is educated.

• There is need to establish effective guidance counselling programmes in schools right from primary school so as to encourage the female gender education.

• National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) should establish a female education unit to attain the equity issue in the Universal Basic Education.

• Adamawa State Ministry of Education should establish a community based “Education Counseling Committees” to carry out counseling in rural areas for parents with negative attitude towards girl-child education to favourably change their attitudes positively towards the girl-child’s education.

REFERENCES


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