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*Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education,  
Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos Nigeria*

*Email: mubashiru.mohammed@lasu.edu.ng*

*08033344750*

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# CROSS-CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION IN OJO RIVERINE AREA OF LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

**Dr. Enitan Omolara Falade**

*Lagos State University, Ojo*

*Faculty of Education,*

*Department of Educational Foundations and Counseling Psychology*

08038242859

*enitan.ajana@lasu.edu.ng*

**Prof. Olawunmi Ayodeji Badejo**

*Lagos State University, Ojo*

*Faculty of Education,*

*Department of Educational Foundations and Counseling Psychology*

08023013913

*ayobadejo2001@yahoo.com*

## **Abstract**

*Education for girl children, particularly at the secondary level, is increasingly recognized as having enormous social and economic benefits for emerging nations like Nigeria. However, in other areas of the country, it is more difficult for girls to enroll in school. Even though research consistently shows that educating girls is the single most important factor influencing women's participation in a country's development, there is still a gender gap in education. In Nigeria, notably the Ojo Riverine area of Lagos states have expressed their commitment to providing education for all of their school-age children and put out efforts to make it easier for girls to enroll in secondary schools and to remain there as well as perform well in those institutions. Despite this dedication, achieving the desired equity and universality of secondary school is still hindered by the low female involvement in education. Regarding the participation of girls in secondary school, the Ojo Riverine Area continues to fall behind. In light of this, the study's goal is to investigate the cross-cultural influences on girls' educational engagement, including the parental attitude toward it as well as the effects of gender preferences, religious beliefs, and female role models. The research project used a qualitative descriptive survey research design. The study's target group was the parents and female pupils of the Ojo Riverine area in Lagos State. Research instruments for the study included questionnaires and interviews.*

**Keywords:** Cross-Cultural, Educational Engagement, Gender and Girl-Child

## **Introduction**

It is commonly accepted that for a society to completely flourish, all of its citizens must have an equal chance to form the attitudes that will result in a feeling of civic duty. However, it has been noted that discrimination against female children is a widespread issue in society, including in politics, the workplace, and the distribution of wealth (UNESCO, 2021). Global recognition of education's transformational ability as a catalyst for societal progress has been achieved (Kombo, 2015). The social, economic, and political facets of human progress all heavily depend on education. The environment has improved as a result of the application of education, making it a better place to live. Education must be attained to promote quick human growth. Thus, education has evolved into a fundamental human necessity. The

importance of basic education has long been recognized in the worldwide agenda for education. It is a fundamental right for every kid, regardless of gender, due to its significance in the growth of the economy and society.

Every child has a right to education, and the state is required to make sure that basic education is both free and required for all children, as stated in Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child from 1979 (United Nation Convention Right of the Child, (UNCRC), 2000, 2011). The state also has a responsibility to support various secondary education options that are open to everyone based on their abilities. The objectives of education in society are outlined in Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The goal of education is to help children reach their maximum potential in terms of personality, skills, and cognitive ability so that both they and society can benefit. Respect for the child's parents, cultural identity, language, values, and cultural heritage is fostered via education.

According to the United Nations' 2016 report, 16 million girls between the ages of 6 and 11 never enroll in school. In the poorest households and the poorest nations, just 34% of girls finish basic school. In addition, young women are about 90% more likely than their peers to have dropped out of secondary education, with 68 million females of upper secondary school age and 32 million of elementary school age not attending (Bridge, 2018). Bokova (2015) reportedly said that it is just untenable that females are being left behind in one of her speeches. One of the most effective ways for underprivileged girls to break free from the cycle of poverty is via education. To rectify this alarming disparity, governments must guarantee equitable access to education. One issue that we seem to have been dealing with for generations is the education of girls. In comparison to women, men were given a dominating position.

Parents urge or require the girls to be married a few years after puberty since society expects it, especially among the area's illiterates, claims Amadi (2013). Socioeconomic factors are a significant barrier to girls' education and the effect of culture. He continued by noting that additional education is required, along with a widespread push against the society that continues to devalue women.

According to Adelakun-Odewale (2018), the issues with the education of girls start at home. Girls receive education at this level in the community in a different way than boys. Parents, siblings, family members, and even neighbours recognize that girls and boys are essentially different from one another. Alabi and Alabi (2014) also pointed out that a significant barrier to women pursuing and completing educational opportunities is an almost universally pervasive societal prejudice in favor of men. The common operation of patriarchal social structures, customary early marriage, the prevalence of early pregnancies, both in and out of marriage, heavier domestic and survival responsibilities for women, particularly in rural areas, and generally lower regard for the value of female life all combine, though differently in each case, to adversely affect the participation of girls and women in formal education.

### **Socio-Cultural Theories**

The social constructivism theory, social learning theory, and cognitive learning theories are all incorporated into this theory. These theorists comprehend how children acquire gender-appropriate conduct in a manner similar to how children learn in general. Other theories focus on explaining gender development and differentiation, such as the Gender Schema Theory and the Psychoanalytic Theory, which emphasizes the unconscious processes

involved in forming gender identity. Similarly, social constructivism claims that a cultural perspective is the most effective way to understand gender (Madu & Obi, 2021; Vygotsky, 1978).

One of the three main schools of thought in the constructivist philosophy of education is social constructivism. The social constructivism theory is most often linked with Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist and philosopher who lived in the 1930s. Kenneth Gergen and John Dewey are only two of the educational social constructivism thinkers that have backed his ideas. He supports the discovery model of learning and highlights the impact of cultural and social environment on learning. Social constructivism's fundamental tenet is that knowledge is created via social interaction and results from social processes (Ven, 2010). According to the socio-cultural viewpoint concept, reality is created via social interaction and is founded on a shared understanding. According to Bandura (1977), for knowledge to be true, it must both be useful and conform to the social consensus. Learning in schools, and the academic success of women in particular, is predicated on what the community is aware of as a result of its cultural expectations of women. This idea will aid in explaining why there is a gender difference in schooling. The expectations placed on females by the community and the overall perception of these expectations by teachers, students, parents, and religious leaders influence the performance or underperformance of women.

### **Parent Attitude and Perception**

The most reliable indicator of a child's educational outcomes is family participation. Children's learning motivation, focus, task perseverance, receptive vocabulary abilities, and minimal behavior issues were all substantially correlated with this component. Young children's learning has been linked to family engagement in schooling (Ede and Okwori 2012). Families are mostly responsible for socializing kids so they can grow up to be good citizens. The more parents participate in the process of educating their children, the more likely it is that the kids will succeed in school and grow up to be contributing members of society. Gomwalk (2019) and Van der Warf, Creamers, and Guldemont (2001) cite parental participation as one of the most economically advantageous ways to raise educational standards.

According to research by Ocho (2015), Griffith (1996), Sui-Chu & Willms (1996), Keith et al. (1998), and others, children who have parents who are more involved in their educational experiences at home tend to have higher academic achievement. The involvement of females in school and their degree of academic performance are significantly influenced by parental attitudes and support. Traditional ideas about the appropriate roles for women and girls in society have a big impact on parents' and communities' attitudes. The only positions traditionally open to women were those of spouses and mothers. As a result, women were viewed as doers who supported the men who worked to maintain the family. Women were viewed as being less capable since they were physically weaker and needed males for protection and leadership. Even now, when socioeconomic shifts have altered the roles that women are now expected to play, these beliefs still dominate. Education is now essential as a result of socioeconomic development, not just to provide chances for revenue generation but also to potentially raise living conditions for individuals, families, and entire communities. The parents' behavior shows how supportive their family is of their children's education. Positive or bad parenting styles are also possible. Parents' bad attitudes about education and learning may discourage their kids from receiving an education. Less parental involvement in children's academics can lead to children's lack of drive and low self-esteem. In many situations, parents' positive attitudes are advantageous to their kids



and may be shown in an improvement in academic performance, children's motivation in learning, and improved reading and writing accomplishment scores (Parker et al., 1997).

Parents' understanding of the advantages of educating their daughters may be lacking. Parental ignorance of the value of education, according to Madu and Obi (2021), is intergenerational and really builds up with time. Or perhaps the advantages of education are not recognized by families. a nation that questions the "suitability" of better-educated women to make excellent marriages. The same study discovered that highly educated women have fewer options for marriage. When curricula conflict with the values parents desire to instill in their children or are irrelevant to the mother-wife role, parents find it difficult to grasp the advantages of education (King 1991). These cultural factors vary greatly between and within nations, as does the parental education level, which has an impact on the enrolment of girls in school.

Families may differ in the importance they place on educating their children and how they see the appropriateness of child labor according to cultural and parental education (World Bank, 2004). Gender disparities in schooling are significantly influenced by parents' educational levels. According to studies, parents respect formal education for their daughters more the more education they have. The level of parental education indicates how receptive parents are to influences outside of tradition. When more precise measurements are not available, parents' education also serves as a limited indicator of family status or income (Hill and King 1993). The educational history of parents, particularly women, has an impact on the academic success and involvement of female students, even if many researchers concur that parents' literacy affects females' schooling (Genet, 1998). African women, according to Hill and King (1993) and Hyde (1993), are mostly responsible for raising their children's educational standards. Their capacity to keep their children in school depends in large part on their own education and resource management. According to the studies, homes led by educated females are more likely to enroll both boys and girls in school and keep them there longer than households led by males or illiterate females. This indicates that a mother's education has a significant impact on her daughters' attendance in school. Mothers could also act as examples for their daughters. According to Ray and Lancaster (2003), domestic tasks have an impact on academic performance, particularly for girls who are overburdened with both home and schoolwork. Girls and women enter nearby towns and villages in different parts of Ojo market around the Riverine areas to engage in trade, which is sometimes a lucrative occupation. It has been discovered that their success encourages other schoolgirls to pursue this enterprise, which causes school dropouts.

### **Problem Statement**

Education is seen as a fundamental human right and as a fundamental requirement for everyone. This is due to the important part it plays in the advancement of humanity. Even while formal education has numerous advantages and the government works hard to give everyone equal chances, the female children in the Riverine area of Ojo Local Government area of Lagos state have had limited access to and poor participation in education.

These girls experience a variety of harms, insecurities, and bad effects as a result of established cross-cultural factors that violate their right to an excellent education, independence, dignity, opportunities, well-being, and self-worth, leave them vulnerable, and prevent them from reaching their full potential as people.

This study sought to find out the influence of cross-cultural factors on girl child education in the Ojo riverine area of Lagos state.

### Method

This study employed a qualitative research methodology and a survey design. The questionnaire only featured a few questions and a two-point scale with the alternatives of agree or disagree to make it simpler for the parents in the Riverine region to understand.

### Results and Discussion

As opposed to educating female children, does cross-culture promote their continued lack of education?

Table1: Response to cross-cultural on Girl-child Education

S/N	RESPONDENTS	A	%	D	%
1	Illiterate	38	90.5	11	11.8
2	Literate	4	9.5	82	88.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

Most of the literate respondents (88.2%) dispute that the traditional belief system is a barrier to girl-child education, even though respondents who think the traditional belief system is a hindrance to girl-child education are respondents.

### Large families' daughters stay at home while the boys go to school.

Table2: Response on girl-child from large families stays at home.

S/N	RESPONDENTS	A	%	D	%
1	Illiterate	40	95.2	4	4.3
2	Literate	2	4.8	89	95.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>

According to Table 2 above, illiterates believe that cross-cultural differences are a hindrance to girls' education, whereas literate respondents did not share this opinion. The significant percentage of low-income earners in the Riverine area of Ojo local government area of Lagos state has an impact on schooling generally.

### Discussion of Findings

According to the analysis of the data gathered, parents, do not care about the education of their female children but provide their male offspring more opportunities. However, because the majority of them take on several spouses, family size has had an impact on the education of girls.

### Summary and Conclusion

The false notion that educating females leads to promiscuity and unintended pregnancies is one of the cross-cultural elements working against their education. The biggest barrier to girls' education appears to be early marriage. Likewise, the idea is that after completing her education, a female should be left alone to take care of family responsibilities.

Women are competitive with males in every area of human endeavour. More education is required, as well as a widespread push to end the practice that still makes women feel less than males. Therefore, it is not unexpected that some respondents still think that teaching a girl child is not a good idea based on the data. Despite this reality, late marriages are

becoming more popular since female children themselves desire to be educated to the fullest extent possible, even if many still fail to do so because of poverty, unintended pregnancy, and peer pressure.

Economic factors play a significant role in the debate over girls' education and the impact of cross-cultural influences; a significant portion of the population in the Riverine area Ojo local government region lives in poverty.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations may be needed considering the significance of the findings:

1. In remote areas, regular campaigns and seminars about the value of girl education should be organized.
2. There should be more adult education centres established in rural areas so that people who have been excluded because their parents did not send them to school may take advantage of adult education. In the end, learning is a lifetime process.

Even though this study identified parents who withheld their daughter's education on the pretext of cultural obstacles, teenage females are still not attending school, especially in riverine areas. People in charge of our numerous ministries of education should give public awareness campaigns significant consideration. There are more and more initiatives calling for improvements in the education of girls. In doing so, some of the successful women in the professional world especially those from specific rural communities should be featured as role models in posters and lectures.

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