

Sociological Basis of Educational Inequality between Rural and Urban Areas of Kano State.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out the role of environmental bearing in influencing educational inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state. Environmental bearing help to shape personality, cultural characteristic, ideological orientation and educational ideas of their teeming populace. The population of this study comprised of the entire senior secondary school students of urban and rural areas of Kano state.. A questionnaire titled “Assessment of Educational Inequality Questionnaire (AEIQ) was used for the study. This was validated by experts and tested for reliability using the test – re – test method and data analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistics. The instrument was administered to 10 schools randomly selected from urban and rural areas of Kano state.. The data collected was analysed using the T test. It was revealed from the results that there is significant influence of settlement pattern in causing educational inequality between urban and rural areas of Kano state. There is a significant influence of parental socio-economic statue in causing educational inequality between urban and rural areas of Kano state. There is also a significant gender difference in term of educational inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state. Based on the findings, recommendations were made which include governments must implement policies that reduce poverty in rural areas, such as improving infrastructure, health and sanitation conditions, and modernizing the agricultural sector.

Introduction

The education sector is no doubt an instrument for national development and an asset to any nation. It is also a formidable tool for socio-economic, political and cultural development of the

human society. Having been considered as one of the main pillars of the human society, human beings are able to pass on/transmit, develop and improve knowledge, skills and abilities. Education generally makes man by developing skills

and competencies, imparting knowledge and learning from the school and colleges which carry individuals well into their personal and professional lives, including in their later years. Education is the surest route to development in any society needs.

In fact the importance of education cannot be overemphasized, without education various socio-economic activities in the societies will remain stagnant and the human society will continue to wallow in ignorance. Despite this fact, several societies in the modern world are still far from providing this basic necessity to the greater proportion of their people. This situation is considered unacceptable more so, if one considers that education has been classified as a major fundamental human rights in contemporary society. Again, in the present globalized society in which every nation is connected to the other, education is perhaps the only instrument for people to adequately cope with the new trend. In most contemporary nation-states including Nigeria, the level of educational attainment vary across regions. Such discrepancies also exist within regions and sub-regions (Yusuf, 2003).

In Nigeria, concerns have been expressed on the glaring educational Inequalities in the education sector which has created a lot of gaps and marginalization among groups in the education sectors. For instance, Yusuf (2003) opined that the

classification of many states in the North as “Educationally Disadvantaged-States” has not even remedied the situation. There have been a lot of discrepancies and Inequalities between the regions in education. One important question to answer is that if the Nigerian education sector is adequately effective to prepare individuals towards attaining the best in life coupled with the Inequalities in the sector? According to Dogra (2011), “there are some major Inequalities in today’s education system which should be addressed and solved, if future of the country has to be secured. It will require a lot of initiative, zeal and hard work on the part of government authorities, education stakeholders, schools and teachers to do away with these negatives (Inequalities) plaguing the education sector”. In line with these views, Igbuzor (2006) also highlighted that the importance of education to human beings cannot be over emphasized. Education is a human right that should be accorded to all human beings solely by reason of being human. For this reason, a lot of international human rights instruments that provide for education as a fundamental human right has been propounded. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the African Charter on Human

and Peoples' Rights (1981) (Igbuzor, 2006).

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 labour as well as bringing about empowerment. This is why there has been lot of emphasis particularly in recent times for all citizens of the world to have access to 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 achievement as well as high levels of absolute educational deprivation of both children and adults. In order to confront these educational Inequalities, rightful approaches, strategies and measures need to be adopted and followed. However, Dogra (2011) sees educational imbalance as a stump which threatens to weaken the formal process of imparting knowledge and skills and the general administration of the entire education system.

These Inequalities have been there ever since education was institutionalized.

Through the course of time, this imbalance has become more and more noticeable, especially in the modern times where equality and parity is the common theme.

Too many of America's most disadvantaged children grow up without the skills needed to thrive in the twenty-first century. Whether in educational attainment between income groups or racial/ethnic groups or across geographic locations—inequality persists. Low levels of performance among the most disadvantaged create long-term problems, particularly in an economy in which higher skill levels are more and more valued and the wages available to less-skilled workers are deteriorating. Some researchers claim, on one hand, that educational inequality is due to social class, geographical location and family background. Others argue that inadequately managed schools bear most of the responsibility for low student achievement

In contrast, rural areas in Africa are often characterized by poor or nonexistent infrastructure and little or no provisions for other critical social services. This in turn negatively impacts the quality of education for rural-area children since even getting to school is a more difficult challenge and illness of a pupil or a family member may force the pupil to drop out of school entirely. Students in rural regions of Africa

are further disadvantaged by the fact that their parents are generally mainly uneducated. Again, we see that other socioeconomic conditions and inequalities greatly impact the quality of education in rural areas compared to urban centers. Therefore according to Olisa et al (1992:65):

The main features of rural areas are depression, degradation and deprivation. Many rural villages are immersed in poverty so palpable that the people are the embodiment of it. In most rural area in Nigeria, basic infrastructure where they exist at all, are too inadequate for meaningful development.

However, limited access to education for girls in Nigeria and in many other developing countries persists and continues to be a major concern for policy makers and the international community. Despite significant progress in the expansion of education in most developing nations, females still lag behind in enrolment and achievement at all levels of schooling. At the lowest level of basic schooling (primary), participation rates are high for both males and females and appear to have promising gender-levelling prospects, but the situation reverses remarkably at later transitions (secondary and

tertiary) (Stromquist, 1989). Multitudes of interrelated factors contribute to gender inequality in education, yet scholars tend to discuss barriers against females separately, giving less attention to how they are related (Stromquist, 1989). The culturalists (for example, Pittin, 1990), for instance, suggest that gender inequality in education results from cultural norms and practices. They may focus on discussing the cultural belief that advanced education for women makes them proud and less likely to humble themselves to perform their traditional roles as mothers and wives. Hence, gender inequality ensues due to cultural factors. A culturalist may also cite and emphasize the pervasive cultural belief that male children are more valued than female children, so when families cannot afford for every child to attend school, they choose to train their male children over their female children. A possible scenario from a culturalist point of view could be represented as follows: In Igbo culture in Nigeria, Ada'nne (the first female child) is the child that the family looks up to, to become the "surrogate" mother. Ada'nne's typical role is to cook, clean the house, run errands, help with family business, and help raise siblings. When she falls short of these roles, immediate and extended family become very disappointed and fear the worst, which could be that she will become unmarriageable and soil the family's reputation including blurring the chance of

marriage for other younger daughter. It is also easy to blame her education.

Some observers have suggested that the problem of socioeconomic influence on educational inequality in developing countries is mainly that of poverty. They maintain that poverty and educational inequality go hand in hand: the higher the poverty level, the higher the chances that socioeconomic factors will influence educational outcomes. This is the case in most less developed poor countries, where staggering levels of disparity in educational access and attainment between different social groups appear to have intergenerational effects. According to the United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF) report (2005), children at risk of being out of school are those who are living in the least developed countries, poorest communities, and least privileged backgrounds.

However, despite phenomenal growth of the formal educational systems and the interest shown to non-formal education in the past decades, some members of the population are still found to be non-literate in Nigeria. The total population of 140,003,542 (male = 71,709,859 female = 68,293,683) was recorded according to 2006 population figure. The 2006 census reports indicate that out of the 140 million people only 491,237 adults were enrolled in adult literacy (male

= 319,309 and female = 171,928). The National Bureau of Statistics (2010) also shows that as at 2004 there was 54.4 level of poverty in Nigeria. There was 43.2% in urban and 63.3% level of poverty in the rural areas. The report also indicate that of the 140 million populace, 68.7 had no education, 48.7 had primary education, 44.3 had secondary education while only 26.3 have had higher than secondary education in Nigeria. Female youth literacy rate in 2007 was 77.3%, lower than the national youth literacy rate of 82% and male youth literacy rate of 86.7%. Female adult literacy was 61.9% in 2007; lower than national adult literacy rate of 69.3%. There was a notable drop in adult literacy in most of the states (NBS, 2007).

Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the present study are to:

- I. To find out the roles of settlement pattern in influencing educational inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state.
- II. To find out the role of parental socio-economic status and educational in influencing educational inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state.
- III. To find out the influence of cultural peculiarities in influencing

educational inequality between urban and rural areas of Kano state.

Research questions

The following are the research questions set to guide the conduct of the study:

- I. What are the roles of settlement pattern in influencing educational inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state?
- II. How do parental socio economic statue contribute to educational inequality in urban and rural areas of Kano state?
- III. What are the role of cultural peculiarities in influencing educational inequality between urban and rural areas of Kano state.?

Research Hypothesis

The following are the research hypothesis formulated to guide the conduct of the study:

- I. There will be no statistical influence of settlement pattern in causing educational inequality between rural and urban secondary school students in Kano state.
- II. There will be no statistical influence of socio-economic statue in causing educational inequality between urban and rural students of Kano state.

- III. There will be no statistical influence of cultural peculiarities in determining gender inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state.

Methodology

The researchers used descriptive research design of survey type. The plan of study involved the use of questionnaire to collect data in order to test the hypothesis generated in the study. The target population for this study was made up of senior secondary school students in Kano State Stratified random sampling was used to draw out the sample. Three schools were randomly chosen from urban areas and three schools were also randomly chosen from rural areas. In each school, 40 students of both sexes were selected, making a total of 240 students.

A self-designed questionnaire called Assessment of Educational Inequality Questionnaire (AEIQ) was used for the study. Part A was designed to collect information on background characteristics of respondents. Part B consisted 27 items on environmental, parental Socio economic background as well as the cultural peculiarities that helped to depict the level of educational inequality between rural and urban areas. The methods used in validating the instrument were face and content validity. Expert judgments were used to determine both. A test-retest

reliability test was also carried out on 20 Senior Secondary School One students who were not part of the sample. The scores obtained from two administrations of the questionnaire at two weeks interval were correlated by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. A reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. The instrument was found to be suitable for data collection. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed by the researchers and school counselors to a sample of 240 students in six schools. Researchers' presence during administration enhanced

better understanding of the items in the instrument. Copies of the questionnaire were collected back immediately after completion by the researchers. The data generated were analyzed using t test for the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significant.

Results

Hypothesis one. There will be no statistical influence of geographical location in causing educational inequality between rural and urban secondary school students in Kano state.

Table one settlement pattern and educational inequality between urban and rural secondary school students in Kano state.

	Mean	Std D	pop	Df	T cal	T crit	D
Urban	4.22	1.067	140	278	24.56	1.9600	Rejected
Rural	1.59	.689	140				

From the table I it can be observed that the obtained t value (4.22) is greater than the critical t value (1.96000).Therefore null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that there is significant influence of settlement pattern in causing educational inequality

between rural and urban areas of Kano state.

Hypotheses two. There will be no statistical influence of socio-economic statue in causing educational inequality between

Table two. Socio-economic statue and educational inequality between rural and urban students.

	Mean	Std D	pop	Df	T cal	T crit	D
Urban	4.36	.909	140	278	26.65	1.9600	Rejected
Rural	1.48	.809	140				

From the table II it can be observed that the obtained t value (4.36) is greater than the critical t value (1.96000).Therefore

null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that there is significant influence of socio-economic statue in causing educational

inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state.

in determining gender inequality between rural and urban areas of Kano state.

Hypothesis three: There will be no statistical influence of cultural peculiarities

Table three: Table for cultural peculiarity in influencing gender inequality.

variable	Mean	Std D	pop	Df	T cal	T crit	D
urban	3.63	.947	140	278	13.20	1.9600	Rejected
rural	2.24	.804	140				

From the table II it can be observed that the obtained t value (**13.20**) is greater than the critical t value (**1.96000**). Therefore null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that there is significant influence of cultural peculiarities in influencing educational inequality between urban and urban areas of Kano state.

other critical social services. This in turn negatively impacts the quality of education for rural-area children since even getting to school is a more difficult challenge and illness of a pupil or a family member may force the pupil to drop out of school entirely. Students in rural regions of Africa are further disadvantaged by the fact that their parents are mostly poor and uneducated.

Discussions

Inequality is often referred to as lack of equality, being unequal in amount, size, value or rank, lack of evenness, regularity or uniformity, lack of due proportion or uneven distribution of resources (World Book, 2002). There is wide gap in term of educational attainment between rural and urban areas of Kano state. This came into existence as a result of various unfavorable environmental factors surrounding the rural environment of Kano state. Rural regions have experienced acute educational inequality. The area characterized by poor or nonexistent infrastructure and little or no provisions for

The quality of education offered is affected by poor attendance resulting in low retention rates. The physical facilities are in poor condition and the teachers are not adequately prepared for their roles. The morale amongst teachers is low due to the basic conditions of service such as the work environment.

On the settlement pattern that exist between urban and rural environment. There is unequal rate of development. The implication of this settlement pattern for educational advancement in urban area is that the urban centres began to attract the rural immigrants who liked to settle in

towns to enjoy the social amenities that are provided in the urban areas. The facilities available are such that they could attract much population, good buildings and teachers. Communication facilities are available and schools are often supervised. Educational statistics are easy to get. And there is flow of information between the schools and local monitoring educational units. But in the rural areas, most of the facilities are not available hence they could not attract population, teachers and government officials.

The influence of settlement pattern in causing educational inequalities have been buttressed by the number researchers such as Bull et al 1992, Helge 1990, Toronto 1994). Adewale (2002) who opined that settlement pattern in rural areas which involve isolation, limited access to students services and program, lack of cultural diversity, poor health delivery system, and lack of social amenities such as electricity and tap water contributed significantly in hampering rural areas to attend school compare to urban areas

Again, we see that other socioeconomic conditions and inequalities greatly impact the quality of education in rural areas compared to urban centers. The link between socio-economic and educational background of the parents and children educational process had been highlighted

by number of studies in looking at the interaction between the children in particular and the household income and socio-economic status. All the studies agreed that children's „enrolment, retention and completion can seriously be affected by the low socio-economic status and low educational level of the parents which resulted to poverty. (Porteus et al, 200; Gakuru cited in Ackers et al, 2001; Ranasinghe & Hartog, 2002; Vavrus, 2002; Hunter & May, 2003; Dachi & Garrett, 2003; UNICEF, 2005; Birdsall et al, 2005; Bruneforth, 2006; Cardoso & Verner, 2007; Guo & Zhang 2008; Zhao & Glewwe, 2010; Wang 2010), Haruna & Unyebu (2011), Ikwuba (2010), Isah (2004), Inuwa (2009). Poverty could be regarded as the most common primary and contributory reason for many children to be out of school“ (Glewwe, 2010) call poverty, a plausible explanation of school disruption“. This is an underlining factor in Nigeria as a whole. People in rural areas live below a dollar daily. The poverty level is so high for them to afford schooling opportunities for their children. Many children in the rural areas in Nigeria do not have the opportunity of being enrolled into schools; end up as school drop-outs or receive poor quality education. This phenomenon is linked to the prevalence of

extreme poverty, high level of ignorance and illiteracy among the rural populace.

This study also revealed that there is a barrier to the access and participation of females in secondary education more especially in rural areas. The population of females attending schools in urban areas of Kano state outnumber greatly than those in rural areas. Girls are often sent to work in the markets or to hawk wares on the streets to supplement the family income. Most rural parents, especially in large families with limited resources enrol their boys in school rather than the girls. Some parents also keep their daughters out of school due to misinterpretation of religious teaching especially Islamic teaching and also due to cultural bias. These are in agreement with the writings of author such as Colclough et al (2000), Stromquist, (1989), Klasen (2002), and Dollar & Gatti, (1999). These studies highlight that due to patriarchal culture in most of Third World nations, males are more valued than females and females are generally viewed as subordinates of males. Hence, the training of boys in school is given more priority, while girls receive attention in the form of nurturing them to be good future wives and mothers

Conclusion

Education has to do with a process of teaching, training and learning especially

in schools or colleges to improve knowledge and skills. Education is also a tool for any meaningful development in societies. Inequality is common in the education sector. There is a wide disparity in school enrolment for boys and girls especially in rural areas of Kano state. Women that are denied education are usually married out at tender age as low as 10 years old. They are often denied vocational skills and hence they are not productive. Due to over dependence on male partners, women are vulnerable to all forms of abuse. There is growing interest in female education in Nigeria but the gap in school enrolment is still wide. The United Nations (2007), observes that girls and children from poorer or rural families are least likely to attend school due to poverty: This is an underlining factor in Nigeria as a whole and some other part of African. People in rural areas live below a dollar daily. The poverty level is so high for them to afford schooling opportunities for their children. Many children in the rural areas in Nigeria do not have the opportunity of being enrolled into schools; end up as school drop-outs or receive poor quality education. These phenomena is linked to the prevalence of extreme poverty, high level of ignorance and illiteracy among the rural populace

Recommendations

- A mobilization programme on the importance of gender education is needed in our societies and the programme can also be organized through the mass media. With that, majority of the people that live particularly in the rural areas of Nigeria can be enlightened on the value of men and women and how they can contribute to national development.
- The empowerment of women is very important in Kano state. They should be adequately equipped with vocational skills that can help them to be productive and also contribute to national development..
- Women in Kano state need intense moral, financial and psychological support from their men folk that would remove the lesser sex syndrome on them. These supports if provided will no doubt remove the existing power relation where men always believe they are superior sex.
- To address education crisis, governments must implement policies that reduce poverty in rural areas, such as improving

infrastructure, health and sanitation conditions, and modernizing the agricultural sector.

- The main concern in rural development is to bring about the modernization of rural society through a transition from traditional isolation to integration with the nation. It constitutes a process of planned change for which the one approach or the other is adopted for improvement and or transformation of the lot of the rural populace.

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