

## SURVEY OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN NATION BUILDING

Ruth A. Irimiya<sup>1</sup>, Dunka D. Gokas<sup>2</sup>, Kumleng T. Abisha<sup>3</sup>, Nancin D. Mutkires<sup>4</sup>

Department of Social Science Education, Faculty of Education,  
University of Jos, NIGERIA.

rutsomiya@yahoo.com, davidd@unijos.edu.ng, tongdyenabisha@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

*This research work, a survey of gender inequality in education and the role of Social studies in nation building discusses the factors responsible for the challenges of women education and gender inequality in education of men and women ranging from social, economic, and religious points of view. It also identified Social studies as a discipline concerned with learning about people, how they live, form and structure societies, govern themselves and provide for their material and psychological needs, use and misuse these resources. The simple percentages and Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to analyze the hypotheses. The findings reveal that there is a significant relationship between gender inequality in education and the role of Social Studies for nation building. It also found out that Social Studies does not significantly influence gender. Conclusions were made and one major recommendation that policy making, should be formulated to consider women in the main stream of affairs and decision making positions.*

**Keywords:** Gender inequalities, Role of social studies, Nation building and survey

### INTRODUCTION

The task of nation building is one that involves the participation of all members of the society, it entails the aggregate of all the experiences, skills, attributes and specializations' that members of a society contribute towards the development, or in order to move their society/nation forward. It is important that all members of such a society enjoy equal privileges and opportunities devoid of any form of discrimination based on any perceived or imagined inadequacies which may cut across age, religion, sex, gender etc.

In Nigeria and the world over, education has served as an instrument for nation building. Most countries of the world have made investments in the development of their citizens through appropriate and deliberate investment and funding of the education sector and the provision of resources needed to ensure that pupils are exposed to equal opportunities and accesses to quality education. Consequently, the United Nations stipulates and encourages all member nations to commit at least 15% to 20% of her national budget to education. This according to her is necessary if the nation wishes to make giant strides in the pursuit and development of all educational goals and the generality of the people. The National Policy on Education sees education as the "instrument per excellence" for effecting national growth NPE (2004). To this end, the philosophy of the nation's education is structured and developed around the national policy on education which is in line with the philosophical basis for the introduction of Social Studies education within the educational system. It is hoped that through a cultural and better understanding of the values inherent in Social Studies, it will lead to the development of responsible and responsive individuals who will be vanguards of national development as social actors. In this regard, the role of Social Studies cannot be over emphasized as it relates to nation building.

Within the traditional African society, Nigeria and some places the world over, there is a lot of emphasis on the development of the male child at the expense of the girl child. The family here plays a major role in the division of labor and distribution of resources. The general social disposition which is worsened by traditional beliefs places the development of the girl child at a disadvantage and further makes the girl child vulnerable to all manner of oppression, none the least depriving her of basic and advanced education. In such cases, girls are either forced into early marriages or in dire circumstances; some are used as sex objects in a bid to augment the family's income. The proceeds from this is then used to send the male child to school. And sometimes to the girl child feels inferior to her male counter part and grows up with low self esteem.

Denying access and opportunities that ultimately empowers women and girls is counter productive. Gender inequality especially in Nigeria centers on societal beliefs and preferences, religious and economic factors. This encourages stereotypes with individual family members being assigned paths without recourse to their abilities, competencies and experiences Foluke (2017). This notion is wrong as women have the same intrinsic worth as men these among other issues would be addresses in this articles and the question. Why is there gender inequality in the education still remains important.

### **LITERATURE PREVIEW AND EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

Gender inequality is not just a human rights issue. It is essential for the achievement of sustainable development, a peaceful and prosperous world. It is a situation in which traditionally, women and girls have limited access to education, ownership of land and assets in Nigeria. They are denied equal treatment in inheritance rights, human resources development and sustainable economic growth (This day, 2017). This tends to be greater in poor and developing countries, among the poor of the poor within these countries (World Bank 2001).

Hill and King 1995; Klassen 1999 and 2000; Knowles 2002 have shown that, gender inequality in education has direct and indirect effects on growth and stems from the above assertions. The implication here is that gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a man or woman given the same context. There are a number of gender inequality issues in a variety of fields or spheres which exists and are in practice around the world. Bigelow (2018) as contained in the borgen project (2018) listed a couple of these important example today to include; infant and life expectancy which shows a survival disadvantage for girls under five years in countries like China and India to be low; access to parental care and maternal mortality where it is estimated that over 308,000 women in developing countries died from pregnancy related causes in 2017 alone; unequal access to education of girls and boys coupled with the discrimination therein; illiteracy, economic independency and dependence which shows increases in female labor force participation. But on an unequal basis with men in terms of remuneration although this results in faster economic growths, women also carry disproportionate amount of responsibility for unpaid care work; and observed violence against women, sexual assault and rape, female genital mutilation, child marriages, human trafficking and poor representation in government among other issues.

Gender refers to the roles, responsibilities, opportunities, privileges and expectations ascribed to males and females by the society. These societies determine and expect men and women, boys and girls to behave in a specific way (Oakley 1972 Hannan 2001; Akinboye 2004;). This is different from sex which is the biological and physiological difference between a male and a female. The case of gender here is a social structure which places men and women in different unequal positions in societies based on expectations, division of labor and access to

power, resources and opportunities thereby shaping their life expectations. Women and girls are constantly faced with a lot challenges especially in Nigeria. Some of these include, unhealthy religious practices which affects school enrolment, and socio-cultural factors where most communities regard women as second class citizens and so thus making them to enjoy less and limited rights. This denies the girl child access, opportunities and privileges ordinarily as their male siblings. They may be forced to remain at home to take care of domestic engagements of cooking, cleaning, washing etc. (Molmes 1973; Noskie 1990; Tahir 1999) support this view. They are also economically disadvantaged which reduces economic returns. Early marriages also cut short bright futures of women and girls robbing them of the right quality education and livelihood. It is equally assertive that given the chance, most African parents and Nigerians would rather invest in their male children rather than the females Oludare (2000).

The task of nation building is a broad spectrum which should involves all and sundry. A nation is a large group of people with strong bonds of identity, an imagined community, a tribe on a grand scale. National identity is based on shared culture, religion, history, language or ethnicity (Rasmussen, 2001). It is a common postulated relationship, a shared cultural heritage, linguistic coherence, one language and a sense if identification by members within the nation. The idea of national affiliation is a deep rooted one the human psyche and members of a nation suffer a very visceral response to any threat against it, real or perceived. Nation building on the other hand is constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state. It is aimed at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. (wikipedia Retrieved 24<sup>th</sup> February 2019). It can involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructural development to foster social harmony and economic growth. Andreas Wimmer (Retrieved, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2019) sees three factors that determine the success of nation building over the long run. The early development of civil society organizations, the rise of a state capable of providing public goods evenly across a territory and The emergence of a shared medium of communication.

Education on the other hand has been variedly defined and Nelson Mandela as quoted by Duncan (2013) sees “education as the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. Education is the key to eliminating gender-inequality-to-reducing-poverty-to-creating a-sustainable planet, to preventing needless deaths, illnesses and to fostering peace, and in a knowledge economy education is the new currency by which nations maintain economic competitiveness and global prosperity. Duncan (2013) further stated that without education, children are at increased risks of abuses, most especially girls’ and women. It is important that all hands must be on deck to provide opportunities, privileges, options and leverages for girls and boys, men and women if the objective of moving the nation forward is to be achieved. Moreso, educating children especially the girl child quarantees a fruitful nation.

Social Studies education by nature is dynamic. It focuses on man in relation to his environment with vital variables as values, attitudes, skills and knowledge which constitutes the content materials of the subject. (Kazi, 2007). It is an integrated field of study which utilizes contents and methods from the social sciences, arts and humanities in a kind of fusion of curriculum. Meziobi (1993) also believes that, in order to develop the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains which are necessary for the individual to contribute positively towards the development of his society would need an all round education found in social studies education. It is also an education that is aimed at provision of a kind of moral code and to prepare young children to fit and cope with the growing industrial society. It helps individuals to find excitement and motivation in the process of social education via

exploration, inquiry and discovery but with emphasis on developing competencies, values and attitudes essential for citizens in a free society. (Kazi, 2007).

According to (Bozimo, 1993) Social Studies is defined as a specialized area of study that deals with the study of man and his environment and how they interact with each other. According to the author, environment in this context connotes social, political, physical, cultural and technological aspects of man. These definitions of Social Studies places the development of skills, values, attitudes, knowledge bases, competencies, attributes and norms at the center of any form of education which should enable man function effectively as a member of his society making informed and reasoned decisions based on valuable judgment. The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS 2000) which stands as the primary membership organization for Social Studies educators further posit that Social Studies programs have a major purpose of promoting civic competencies which is knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students require, it integrates knowledge, skills, and attitudes within and across disciplines, constructs a knowledge base and attitudes drawn from academic disciplines as specialized ways of viewing reality, and its programs reflects the changing nature of knowledge fostering entirely new and highly integrative approaches to resolving issues of significance to humanity. (NCSS, 2000). Its global goals include:

- a. The inculcation of values, attitudes and appreciations in learners.
- b. The development of skills like group, social intellectual and manipulative skills.
- c. The-acquisition-of-knowledge-and-understanding-and-the-development-of-concepts, generalizations peculiar to Social Studies as a discipline or subject. (Adopted from Kazi, 2007).

The issues of gender inequality are prevalent in many areas of life including education, employment, medical care, law and violence. There are also overt examples of inequality such as large discrepancies in payments between men and women and more subtle examples such as different interview questions which are fewer asked for women than men. In Nigeria, issues of gender inequality have been on the increase for decades. Modernity has redefined the role of the woman which is vastly different from what it used to be.

Gender inequality is largely influenced by religious beliefs and diverse cultured beliefs where women are largely considered to lowly and weak than men, therefore only seen fit to be home keepers and child bearers ( Oakley, 1972; Ogundis, 1979; Mustapha 1987; Hannan 2001; Akinboye 2004; Hannah 2017. These largely stem from improper education, tradition and culture mentality and religion which hinders the country's growth (Hannah, 2017). This is true in Nigeria because women constitute about 50% of the country's population. Not allowing women to contribute may as well become an economic self-termination. Again Knowles S., Lorgelly P. K., and Owen P. D. (2002) argue that, there is evidence that female education especially in developed countries also produces social gains by reducing fertility and infant mortality, improving family and child health, increasing life expectancy and the quality and quantity of children's educational achievement. To Eneji (2014) everything could change if women are empowered and Politics would be more collegial, businesses would be more productive and communities' would be healthier. Empowering women would make our world a better place.

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study is aimed at demonstrating the impact of gender inequality in education in Nigeria and the role of Social Studies for nation building. Specifically, it will:

1. Identify the causes of gender inequality in education.
2. Determine the consequences of gender inequality in education on women.

3. Identify the effects of gender inequality in education.
4. See the relevance of women education in Nigeria's development.
5. Highlight the challenges of women education in Nigeria.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were drawn to guide the study.

1. What are the causes of gender inequality in education?
2. What are the consequences of gender inequality in education on women and the nation?
3. To what extent is women education in Nigeria a challenge?
4. Is educating women relevant to nation building?
5. What is the role of Social Studies in relation to gender inequality?

## HYPOTHESES

The following two hypotheses have been designed and to be terse at 0.05 level of significance namely:

1. There is no significant relationship between gender inequality in education and the role of Social Studies for nation building.
2. Social Studies education does not significantly influence gender education.

## METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDRES

The study adopted a survey design. Sampling technique used for the study was stratified random sampling to select respondents from the target population of 929 in the study area. The researchers used stratified random sampling to select a sample of 186 social studies teachers, 93 teachers are in public secondary schools and 93 teachers are also in private secondary schools all in Mangu Local Government Area. A structured questionnaire was designed by the researchers and validated by a lecturer in test and measurement in University of Jos before using it to collect data from the respondents in the study area. The designed questionnaire was a five (5) point likert scale of measurement modes. The statement in the questionnaire was scaled as follows: Strongly Agreed = 4 points; Agreed = 3 points; Disagree = 2 points strongly disagreed = 1 point and Undecided = 0. The reliability of the instrument was established by using random sampling of 186 respondents within and outside Mangu Local Government Area. The result would be analyzed using the cronbach alpha method of reliability to obtain a coefficient of reliability of instrument. The procedure yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.71 which is ideal for the study. The researchers went to the different schools in the study area and obtained permission before administering the instrument to the respondents. For the purpose of data analysis the researchers used the simple percentages to analyze respondents bio-data and the research questions while the Pearson moment correlation coefficient was used for testing of significant relationships. The

formulae stated as follows;  $r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 \sum y^2)}}$  Where: r = product moment correlation

coefficient; x = deviation of each (x) score from the mean; y = deviation of each (y) score from the mean;  $\sum$  = Summation sign Square root.

## DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

The results of the findings were analyzed based on the research questions and hypotheses:

**Research Question 1:** What are the causes of gender inequality in Mangu Local Government Area?

**Table 1. Percentage of causes of gender inequality in education**

S No.	Items	No. of Respondents	A	%	D	%	U	%
1	Religion Factor	186	150	80.6	29	15.6	7	3.8
2	Economic Factor	186	124	66.7	24	12.9	38	20.4
3	Social-Cultural Factor	186	142	76.3	19	10.2	25	13.4

Table shows that 80.6% of the respondents agreed that religious practices causes' gender inequality in education, 15.6% disagreed while 3.6% were undecided. These responses were an indication that religious practices of the people were strictly responsible for gender inequality in education in Mangu L.G.A. Other factors include economic and social cultural factors which attracted 66.7% and 76.3% respectively.

**Research Question 2:** What are the consequences of gender inequality in education on women?

**Table 2. Status of gender inequality in education**

S No.	Items	No. of respondents	A	%	D	%	U	%
1	Economy of one will reduce	186	94	50.5	63	33.2	29	15.6
2	Women will be in ignorance	186	119	64	49	26.3	18	9.7
3	Broken homes	186	91	48.9	63	33.9	32	17.2

**Consequences of Gender Inequality in Education on Women**

The analyses in Table 2 above shows that 50.5% Of the respondents agreed that the economy of the nation will reduce due to gender inequality in education, while 33.9% disagreed which is an indication gender inequality in education causes the economy to reduce. Similarly, the table also indicated that women will be left in ignorance as a consequence of gender inequality in education. However, 26.3% disagreed and 9.7% were undecided respectively. Also 48.9% agreed that broken homes can cause gender inequality while 33.9% of the respondents disagree and 17.2% where not sure of their opinion.

**Research Question 3:** To what extent is women education in Nigeria a challenge?

**Table 3. The Extent of the Challenges of Gender Inequality in Nigeria**

S No.	Items	A	%	D	%	U	%
1	Sexual education in educational institutions	152	82.3	13	7	19	10.2
2	Poverty and lack of Government policy on women's education	128	68.8	23	12.4	35	18.8

The table above revealed that 82.3% of the respondents agreed that lack of sexual education in educational institution leads to unwanted pregnancies and easy withdrawal of girls from school however 7% of the respondents disagreed while 10.2 were undecided. Also 68.8% of the respondents indicated that poverty and lack of government policy on women's education is another challenge of gender inequality in Nigeria.12.4% disagreed 18.8% were undecided.

**Research Question 4:** Is educating women relevant to nation building?

**Table 4. Relevance of women’s education to nation building**

S No.	Items	No. of Respondents	A	%	D	%	U	%
1	Women are the great socializing force	186	166	89.2	9	4.8	1	5.9
2	When women have equal education	186	146	78.5	13	7	27	14.5

The analyses in table 4 indicated that 89.2% of the respondents are of the opinion that women are great socializing force of the society thus, education should be made available to them; whereas only 4.8% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, 5.9% could not take any decision. The table also revealed that 78.5% agreed that if women have equal education with men; they will develop the whole sector of life, nation and the community. 7% and 14% of the respondents disagreed and undecided respectively

**Research Question 5:** What is the role of Social Studies in relation to gender inequality?

**Table 5. The role of Social Studies in Relation to Gender Inequality**

S No.	Items	No. of Respondents	A	%	D	%	U	%
1	Social Studies be introduced	186	135	72.6	20	10.8	31	16.7
2	Basic rudiments of human rights	186	156	83.8	9	4.8	21	11.3
3	Concept of freedom human rights	186	160	86	5	2.7	21	11.3
4	Gender equality brings about nation	186	160	86	7	3.6	19	10.2
5	Nation building guarantees citizens	186	168	90.3	9	4.8	9	4.8
6	Gender equality institutions	186	173	93	7	3.8	6	3.2
7	Social studies aims at making	186	154	82.8	13	7	19	10.2
8	Multi-dimensional social studies	186	91	48.9	69	37.1	26	14

The analyses in table 5 above indicated that, 72.6% of the response favored the introduction of Social Studies at senior secondary school level so that the learners can have a total organized learning experience while 10.8% and 16.7% of the response disagreed and undecided respectively. The second item on the table which has to do with the basic rudiments of human rights receive an acceptance 83.9% 4.8% disagreed and 11.3% are indecisive. Also 86% affirmed that concept of freedom, human right and liberation which can assist in the attainment of party between men and women are taught in Social Studies; 2.7% disagreed while 11.3% were indecisive. Similarly, 86% were of the opinion that gender inequality brings about nation building in Nigeria, while 3.8% disagreed. Also 90.3% unanimous in their response while 93% affirmed that through gender equality institutional transformation enhances nation building. In addition to the role of Social Studies in relation to gender inequality, 82.8% were of the opinion that Social Studies aims at making students become aware of problem relating to gender issues. However, 7% disagreed while 10.2% were undecided. Finally, 48.9% agreed that nation building is multi-dimensional in nature while 37.1% disagreed with that view. However, 14% could not take a stand.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between gender inequality in education and the role of Social Studies in nation building.

**Table 6. Summary of Pearson moment correlation coefficient for hypothesis one**

	<b>Gender Inequality brings about Nation Building in Nigeria</b>	<b>Nation Building Guarantees Citizens Well Being</b>
Equality brings about nation Building in Nigeria.	1	.353**
Pearson correlation sig. (2-tailed) N	184	.000 182
Building Guarantees Citizens well	.353***	1
Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.000 182	184

Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2-tailed).

The table above shows the correlation relationship of the variables used for testing of the hypothesis. Therefore the p-values of the variables are less than the level of significance (i.e.  $0.00 < 0.05$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected as against the alternative hypothesis; there is significant relationship between gender inequality in education and the role of Social Studies in nation building.

**Hypothesis Two:** Social Studies education does not significantly influence gender.

	When women have equal education with men, they will develop the whole sector of life, nation and community.	Social Studies has the capabilities and potentials of solving the problems of inequality, injustice, disparity, discrimination which hinder development in Nigeria
When women have equal education with men they will develop the whole sector of life, nation and community. Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 182	.050 .501 182
Social Studies has the capabilities and potentials of solving the problems of inequality, injustice, disparity, discrimination which hinder development in Nigeria. Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.050 .051 182	1 184

The above table shows the correlation relationship between Social Studies education and gender equality. Relationship between them is positively correlated and very weak too i.e. 0.050 per cent. The p-values of the variables are greater than the level of significance (i.e.  $0.501 > 0.05$ ). hence, the null hypothesis is upheld as against the alternative hypothesis; Social Studies education on education does not significantly influence gender equality.

Based on the results of this finding, religious factor is a major cause of gender in equality in the study area as the responses score 80 6% compared to other factors responsible for gender inequality which has consequences on women such as women will be left In ignorance which



will affect the future generation. Also, women are great socializing force of the society hence education should be more available to them because it will make them have a clear idea of what development programs are available ,and how women fit into them because nation building guarantees citizens well being. Hypothesis one shows that there is a significant relationship between gender inequality in education and the role of Social Studies in nation building therefore Social Studies education cannot be neglected but must be taught in schools were male and female children attend. Hypothesis two shows that Social Studies do not significantly influence gender equality in the study area.

## CONCLUSION

The predominance of men in principal sectors of the economy is an indication of near exclusion of women from their negligible representation different sectors of the economy, it is clear that policies and strategies must be designed to address the social, legal and economic constraint that face women. The contribution of women to Nigerian economy can be enhanced by tackling the root of the problems discussed above.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended:

1. Policy makers and development partners must consider gender differences and the implications of development intervention for women at each level of policy and project development for all social and economic sector.
2. In other to achieve economic development, the program strategy that is effective in raising women's productivity and income should focus on women.
3. In terms of policy making, there is need to consider gender implications which is becoming increasingly evident in economic situations. Economic reforms should be structured to assist women.
4. There is need to develop the consciousness in the society of the fact that gender equality is a societal project.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Akinboye S. (2004). *Paradox of Gender Equality in Nigerian Politics*. Lagos: Concept Publication limited. Pp20, 29,54,190.
- [2]. Andreas Wimmer (2019). What is a nation? Wikipedia 24<sup>TH</sup> Feb 2019. <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/nation-buiding>
- [3]. Arne Duncan (2013). USAID US Secretary of Education. <http://blog.usaid.gov/2013/04/education-the-most-powerful-weapon>
- [4]. Bigelow S. C. (2018). Borgen Project The Blog July 11, 2019.
- [5]. Bozimo G.O., & Ikwumelu S. N. (1999). Issues in Social Studies Education in Nigeria.
- [6]. Duncan A. (2013). US Secretary of Education SAID. <http://blog.usaid.gov/2013/04/education-the-most-powerful-weapon>
- [7]. Department of English Language Education, School of Education. National Open University of Nigeria. 14-16 Ahmadu Bello Way Victoria Island Lagos Nigeria.
- [8]. Economic Development? Some Cross-Country Empirical Evidence” Oxford Economics Papers 54(1 January):118-149.

- [9]. Eneji M, A. (2014). *Enterprenuership and poverty Reduction in Nigeria*. Abuja: Impressive prints
- [10]. Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERC Press.
- [11]. Foluke, F. (2017). *Gender Inequality in Education: implications for National Development*. Department of English Language Education, School of Education. National Open University of Nigeria. 14-16 Ahmadu Bello Way Victoria Island Lagos Nigeria.
- [12]. Foluke, F. (2017). Gender Inequality in Education: implications for National Development Forum. <http://www.globalpolicy.org>. retrieved
- [13]. Hannan, (2001). *Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality Women Watch Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women*. New York: Hopkins Press.
- [14]. King, E., & Hill, A. (1995). *Women's Education in Development Countries*. Baltimore: John
- [15]. Klassen, S. (1999). "Does Gender Inequality Reduce Growth and Development? Evidence from Cross-Country Regression." Policy Research Report on Gender and Development Working Paper 7, World Bank, Washington DC.
- [16]. Knowles S., Iorgelley, P.K., & Owen P. D. (2002). "Are Educational Gender Gaps a brake on National policy on Education NPE (2004). The Federal Government of Nigeria.
- [17]. Oakley, A. (1972). *Sex, Gender and Society*. London: Temple Smith.
- [18]. Ogundusi, A, (1979). *Women Leadership*. An Address Delivered at NUT Seminar Held 9<sup>th</sup> April 1979(UPD).
- [19]. Okam, C.C. (1998). *Readings in New Developments in Social Studies Curriculum in Nigeria*.
- [20]. Rasmussen P.R. (2001). *What is a Nation or State? An attempt at a definition*. Global Policy
- [21]. United Nations Children's Education Fund UNICEF (2003). *The State of the World's Children in 2004*. New York: UNICEF.
- [22]. World Bank, (2000). *Baluchistan Primary Education Program (1992-1999) Implementation completion report*. Washington DC: World Bank.