

EFFECT OF GROUP COUNSELLING ON THE ATTITUDE OF NOMADIC FULANI MALE PARENTS TOWARDS GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION IN MADAGALI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the effect of group counseling on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Four objectives were stated and three (3) null hypotheses were tested. Quasi-experimental design was adopted. The population comprised 139 adult male parents from the four nomadic clans in the study area. Twelve male parents were randomly selected from each of the four (4) nomadic clans totaling 48 nomadic male parents. Parents Attitude Towards Girl-Child Education Scale (PATGCES) developed by Dakasku (1998) was adapted. Three (3) stages were used in collecting the data: pre-treatment, treatment and post treatment phases. Independent t-test was used to analyze hypotheses 1 and 2 and one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test hypothesis 3. The results were considered at $P < 0.05$ level. The findings of the study showed that group counseling had a significant effect on changing the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria. It is further discovered that the age of nomadic male Fulani parents and their clan differences had no significant effect on their attitude toward Girl child education. It is recommended among others that effective guidance and counseling programmes in schools should be introduced right from primary school. Trained counselors should also be posted to the rural communities (nomadic) to enlighten parents on the importance of girl-child education.

Keywords: effect, attitude, nomadic parents, girl-child and education

INTRODUCTION

There has been a lot of concern in recent times on gender imbalance, especially in the educational aspect. Education being one of the pivots on which the developmental aspiration of a meaningful society depends, has been generally accepted to be the bedrock of development in any community or nation. No nation can aspire to achieve its full development potentials unless most of its people, men and women, boys and girls are full participant in the process. United Nations International Cultural Educational Fund (UNICEF) (2004) Millennium Development Goals for example, called for all children to have access to and complete a good quality primary education by the year 2015 and gender disparity in education to be met by the year 2005. Good quality education according to Higgins (1995), include the acquisition of values, attitude and self development.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (2004), in one of her objectives enshrined in the National Policy on Education the provision of an increasing number of primary school pupils with the opportunity for education of high quality, irrespective of sex, social, religious or ethnic background. It is to develop the individuals so that they can be useful to their family and society at large. It also helps individuals to develop their talents fully so as to be able to integrate their culture with their environment. Nigerian Government believes that education is the means of upgrading the socio-economic condition of the people especially the rural populace. The education for all goal is geared towards reducing illiteracy to the barest minimum, remove all sorts of gender discrimination in educational provisions at all levels,

and ensuring that everyone acquires minimum learning for his or her survival and self-efficacy (Fajonyomi, 2008).

The FGN (2004) in the Universal Basic Education provides for compulsory and free universal basic education for all children of school age in Nigeria from primary to junior secondary school level. The task of education particularly among the nomadic Fulani is a difficult one, especially their daughters. Records show that only 10% and 2% of the nomadic Fulani males and females respectively in Nigeria are literate (Ismail, 2004).

Nomadic Fulani constitutes an important segment of Nigerian population and make immense contribution in the socio-economic development of the nation just like other special groups. They are found in virtually all the regions of the country, with large concentration in the north-eastern, north-western and part of middle-belt (Sa'ad, 2002). Aliyu (2002) also revealed that pastoralist is a very prominent occupation among the Fulani nomads. The activities involve both men and women. The men usually own the cattle and women the diary product, making her duty to sell the milk. Sa'ad (2002) observed that a nomadic Fulani girl should also have the right to qualitative education like every one else. This will, no doubt, improve the standard of living of the people. It is necessary to educate and train the nomadic pastoral women in order to enable them to educate their children and to create greater awareness (Ezeomah, 1997). Education has an objective of providing members of the society with skills and knowledge considered necessary performance of particular roles.

Adamawa State Primary Education Board (ADSUBEB) (2006) 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 (2002) said some of these girls were withdrawn from school not with their consents that showed willingness, given the opportunity to further their education. Gorham (1998) observed that in nomadic communities girls are sometimes abducted for marriage even when they are not more than eight years.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The background of this study showed that nomadic Fulani male parents have negative attitude towards girl-child education. Despite the fact that educational policy of Nigeria which advocates for equality in enrolment among boys and girls at the primary school level, the situation on ground shows that education in nomadic communities look as if only males are encouraged to go to school. Observation by the researchers also shows that the girls are mostly engaged in domestic duties and are usually given out for marriage at tender age. Even among those enrolled into schools, only few were allowed to complete their primary education and this becomes terminal for them at that level.

A girl-child out of school contributes to a vicious circle of preventing her from giving her own family a good start in life and slowing down the economic growth and societal development of the country as a whole. Parents who give out their teenage girls in marriage are sabotaging the good effort of the government to give education to those teenage girls. Efforts made by government to reverse this trend have not recorded any meaningful result.

The researchers have observed that in the nomadic schools there are pupils who alternate in their school attendance; those who come today would not be the same pupils who came yesterday. Teachers used to complain, but the parents do not help. The general picture of male versus female enrolment is, in the lower classes (one to three). The female and male enrolment is almost the same. In the higher classes (4-6) only few females are found in the classes. This means that girls are allowed to attend schools along with boys, but later the females will be withdrawn before their completion of primary school. In some areas, the girls are not even allowed to attend school; the parents believe that western education is usually directed to males only.

This negative attitude is of great concern to teachers, consellers, the trend if not checked may bring sex discrimination with the tendency to define men as belonging to the productive sphere of the

division of labour and females belonging to the domestic sphere. This is what actually prompted the researchers to undertake this study. This study therefore determined whether group counselling will help Fulani parents realize the importance of Girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to determine the:

1. effect of group counselling on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents toward girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area Adamawa State..
2. age difference in the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents toward girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State
3. clan difference in the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents toward girl-child education is Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State

HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

Ho₁: group counselling has no significant effect on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

Ho₂: age difference of nomadic Fulani male parents has no significant effect on their attitude towards their girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

Ho₃: nomadic Fulani clan differences have no significant effect on their attitude towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The target population for this study comprised of the entire nomadic Fulani male parents from the four (4) nomadic clans (Kesune, Kwambula, Dirankore and Jiddel) in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State. This population was chosen because it is the male parents that have direct influence on their daughters and can decide whether their daughters should go to school or not.

Forty-eight nomadic Fulani male parents were sampled. Twelve from each of the four clans, (12 x 4 = 48) their age ranges from 25-40 and 41-60 years, which is also, refereed as young and old parents. The sample for this study was picked through random sampling technique from each clan. Six were assigned to experimental and the other six for control group; through randomization using odd and even numbers.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The Parents Attitude Towards Girl-child Education Scale (PATGCES) initially developed by Dakasku (1998) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated through pilot study. The essence of the pilot testing was to provide the researchers with the ideas and cues not foreseen earlier and permits a check of the planned statistical procedures (Borg & Gall, 1983).

The pilot study involved ten nomadic Fulani male parents with negative attitude towards girl-child education from Yaffa, Askira Uba Local Government Area, Borno State. The parents were chosen because they have similar characteristics with the parents used in the main study. The Parents Attitude Towards Girl-Child Education Scale (PATGCES) was administered on them. The session lasted for three weeks. At the end of the third week, the post-test was given to both the experiment and control groups. The result of the pilot study was computed using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, using raw score method. At the end of the validation, a reliability coefficient of .69 was found which shows that the instrument was valid for the purpose of this study.

RESULTS

Ho₁: Group Counselling has no significant effect on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards Girl-child Education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

Table 1: t-test summary of the effect of group counselling on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards Girl-child Education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State

Status	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t Obtained	t Critical	p-level	Remarks
Post-test Exp.	12	28.54	1.25	23	55.82	2.021	<0.05	S
Post test Cont	12	10.45	0.98					

Key: S = Significant

Table 1 shows the summary of independent t-test analysis. The result indicated that the t obtained 55.82 is greater than table t 2.021, this implies that group counselling had a significant effect on the attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards Girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State. Therefore Hypothesis (Ho₁) which states that group counselling has no significant effect on attitude of nomadic Fulani male parents towards Girl child Education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State was rejected.

Ho₂: Age of Nomadic Fulani male parents has no significant effect on their attitude towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

Table 2: t-test summary on the effect of age of nomadic Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State

Age	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t Calculated	t Critical	p-level	Remarks
25-40	24	28.58	1.08	46	0.160	2.674	p>0.05	NS
41-60	24	28.50	1.44					

Key: NS = Not Significant

Table 2 shows that t-obtained 0.160 is less than t-table 2.674. This indicates that there is no significant difference on the attitude of Fulani male parents towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State according to age. Therefore the null hypothesis (Ho₂) which states that age of nomadic Fulani male parents has no significant effect on their attitude towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State was accepted.

Ho₃: Clan difference has no significant effect on the nomadic Fulani male parents' attitude towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State

Table 3: Result of One Way Analysis of Variance on the Effect of Clan difference of nomadic Fulani male parents' attitude towards girl-child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State

Sources of variance	SS	Df	MSS	F	P. level	Remark
Between groups	2.458	3	.819	.459	>0.05	N.S
Within groups	33.500	20	1.670			
Total	35.958	23				

Key: NS = Not Significant

Table 3 shows One Way Analysis of Variance on the influence of group counselling on the clan difference. This result shows that there is no significant difference in all the four clans post test result. This is because obtained F .459 is less than F table 4.17. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that nomadic male parents clan difference has no significant effect on the nomadic Fulani male parents' attitude towards girl child education in Madagali Local Government Area, Adamawa State is retained.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study with respect to the first hypothesis (H_{01}) which states that group counselling has no significant effect on the nomadic Fulani male parents attitude toward girl-child education shows that the therapy given to the experimental group on the importance of Girl-child education had influence on parents' attitude towards girl-child education. In agreement with this finding, Dakasku (2001) reported that group counseling had a significant effect on parents' attitude towards girl-child education. This implication is that when the parents were informed about the importance of girl-child education it brought positive changes in attainment and completion of girl-child education. The findings of this study also gave credence to the findings of Mai (1991) which revealed, the effectiveness of group counseling on students performance, after comparing the treatment group of Pre-test and Post-test, and the placebo group scores of Pre-test and Post-test. Mai (1991) found that there was a significant increment on the treatment group than the control group.

Furthermore, the findings of this study seemed to be consistent with that of Odediran (1990) who revealed that group counseling approach is used as a strategy for modifying faulty personality dimensions of some individuals including behaviour modification and attitude change. This study supported the observation of Carew (1995) that behaviour therapy in general takes the stand that an individual's behaviour is primarily rooted in prior experience and history, therefore, the behaviour which is the basis of one's attitude is being learned and can be adjusted by using psychological procedures (such as group counseling). Furthermore, the finding of this study agreed with the findings of Kagu (1999) and Pindar (1999) who reported that there was an improvement among group counseled subjects than the uncounseled. The findings also agree with Alao's (1991) observation that the effectiveness of group counseling is to provide for change in the client's mode of thinking, feeling and behaviour.

The findings of this study with respect to the second hypothesis (H_{02}), which states that nomadic fulani male parents' age had no significant effect on their attitude towards girl-child education; revealed that age of nomadic Fulani male parents has no significant effect on the parents' attitude towards girl-child education. This study supported the study of Usman (2006) who observed that parents age do not have influence on their attitude towards girl-child education.

The finding also agrees with the findings of Kolo (1997) who reported that there was an improvement in the attitude of counseled subjects regardless of their age. This finding also supported the study of Ismail (2004) on the effect of age on academic achievement. The result indicates that there was no significant difference in the attitude of the subjects towards academic achievement with regards to their age. The outcome of the study would also be attributed to the willingness of the parents to participate and modify their negative attitude towards girl-child education.

Furthermore, the findings of this study in respect of the third hypothesis (H_{03}) which stated that nomadic male parents clan differences have no significant effect on their attitude towards girl-child education revealed that there was no significant difference among the clans after eight weeks of counseling. The interpretation of this result shows that the counseling treatment given to the treatment group did not have any influence on their clans. This study supported the study of Dakasku (2001) which revealed that group counseling did not vary with clans. This study also confirmed the findings of Umar (1996) which revealed that early marriage often marks the end of most of the girl's schooling regardless of their parents' clan and places of residence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were made. Group counseling was effective in changing male parent's attitude positively towards girl-child education. The girl-child education does not only end at changing increased enrolment of female children in schools but also includes promoting favourable attitude towards girl child education, which no doubt, will make the male parents gain happiness and satisfaction in life.

It is also concluded that age of nomadic Fulani male parents has no significant effect on the parents' attitude towards girl-child education and clan differences have no significant effect on their attitude towards girl-child education. The implications of these findings is that the level of parents' awareness and their improved capability to guarantee the freedom of the girl-child to education as is the case with the boy child should be central to parents thinking always.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Since Group Counseling was effective on changing parents negative attitude towards girl child education. Counseling programme should therefore not be restricted to schools only, it may be extended to the local communities with packages on importance of girl's child education.
2. There is need to establish effective guidance counseling programmes in schools right from primary school so as to encourage the female gender education.
3. 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.
4. National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) should establish a female education unit to attain the equity issue in the Universal Basic Education.

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