

The Influence of Islamic Religious Attitudes on Girl-Child Education in Nigeria. A Case Study of Katsina State

By

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Abstract

This research project investigated the relationship between religious attitudes and the state of girl-child education in Nigeria. It seeks to explore the varying influences of Islamic religious beliefs on the access, participation, and outcomes of education for girls, providing a comparative analysis across cultural and religious contexts. The research adopts a descriptive research design. The population of the study consists of Katsina state Islamic scholars. Hat and draw simple random sampling was used in sampling the respondents. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection and simple percentage was used to analyze the data. The result indicated that Islam has a positive influence on girl-child education and the Hausa community supports girl-child education as well. The research recommends that the Nigerian government at all levels should take responsibility for creating awareness on the importance of girl-child education so parents can have the peace of mind that Islam and the Hausa community do not go against the education of a girl-child, to encourage them to enroll their female children into formal school. The introduction and implementation of adult education among uneducated parents will enhance a better understanding of the relevance of girl-child education. In addition, the education of a girl-child at primary and secondary levels should be made free.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Nigeria is an African country with four geo-political zones – south-west, south-east, north-west, and north-east. Hundreds of languages are spoken in the country including Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, and English. The country is endowed with abundant natural resources notably petroleum, mineral resources, natural gas, and agriculture (Danzaria, 2022). As of 2021, it has an estimated population of 225,954,000 (United Nations Population Fund 2022). The capital city of Nigeria is Abuja. Modern Nigeria dates from 1914 when the British protectorates of northern and southern Nigeria were joined together. The country became independent on 1 October 1960. There are two major religions practiced in the country, namely, Islam and Christianity, as well as many other minor religions.

Katsina state is located in the north-western part of Nigeria with a total number of thirty-four local government areas (Nigeria Zip Codes, 2020). The State had been a significant seat of learning and a commercial center of the trans-Saharan trade which covers a total land mass of 24,971 sq km, with a population of 5,801,584 based on the 2006 National Population Census(Katsina State Home of Hospitality, 2016).

In any country, the educational development of a child whether girl or boy is very important because each of them has an important role to play in the development of a country. Historically women have been subjected to social injustice and educational dispossession. The education of a girl has faced hardship because of the societal perceptions of a girl, thinking that the girl is to be trained and brought up to play her natural role as a wife, baby machine, mother, and servant to her husband and in-laws. Imhangbe, Osaghae, and Irabor (2019) stated that the idea that a woman has no other purpose than to marry and have children has brought a lot of disadvantages and consequently backwardness to society because when the mothers are illiterate they don't know the value of education, they are the kinds of parents that prefer to send their children hawking on the streets than to enroll them in schools. In Nigeria, female children are educationally disadvantaged due to the above assertions while boys are sent to school. The number of girls involved in street hawking and house help practices is higher as compared to boys in northern Nigeria. A girl child is raped, abused, and sent off to early marriage as if this was the only reason she was created by God. These kinds of practices can never move the nation forward.

Contrarily, Islam sees a girl with a different perception from that of Nigerian society. Islam is a religion of peace and equity it doesn't differentiate between boys and girls in terms of acquiring knowledge. In Islam, pursuing knowledge is a holy duty irrespective of gender. The significance of acquiring and broadcasting education has been highlighted constantly in the Qur'an and hadiths, which are the decisive source of direction for Muslims. The Prophet (SAW) said, "Convey from me even if it is a verse." (Al-Bukhari, 1987). Girls or women

constitute half of the total population in almost every society; avoiding or treating them as less important is not supported in the Muslim society.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, most of the girls who are supposed to be in school are engaged in one form of domestic service or the other. Despite great encouragement from the government and other religious leaders, many girls still drop out of school under cultural influence and religious misunderstandings. Even in our tertiary institutions, the boys still outnumber the girls due to the same reason.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To examine the role of religious factors in influencing the educational access, participation, and outcomes of girl children.
2. To explore the specific religious beliefs, traditions, and cultural norms that hinder girl-child education.
3. To identify the cultural and societal influence on girl-child Education.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1 What are the roles of Islamic religion in influencing the access, and participation of girls in education?
- 2 What are the religious beliefs, traditions, and cultural norms that hinder girl child education?
- 3 What are the cultural and societal influences on girl child Education?

1.5 Significance of the Study:

The research is on the influence of Islamic religious attitudes on girl-child education. The study is significant as it sheds light on previously unexplored aspects of the relationship between religion, culture, and girl child education. It will help policymakers, educators, and religious leaders understand the challenges faced by girls within religiously influenced societies, enabling them to develop targeted interventions to ensure inclusive and equitable education for all girls, regardless of their religious background.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review.

2.0 Introduction

The Chapter comprises the following subheadings: conceptual framework, history of Girl-child education in Nigeria, concept of girl-child education, importance of girl-child education, Islamic views on girl-child education, societal attitudes towards girl-child education, problems of girl-child education in Nigeria, review of empirical studies, summary and conclusion.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 History of Girl-Child Education in Nigeria

It must be understood that historically education in Sub-Saharan Africa and even Asia was initially available only for males (EFA Report, 2003/2004). This means that women are excluded from the start of formal jobs, where work is often negotiated through education and the acquisition of skills. It does not suit Nigeria that women attend education late and that women's education mostly leads to domestic needs. Thus, even in Latin America, where education was first widespread, women reportedly received no formal education at the time of independence but often received guidance in helping them with household chores and raising children (Offorma, 2009). However, the advent of Christianity and the emergence of science changed the order of things. The first school in Nigeria was founded by Christian missionaries. In fact, Rev. Thomas Freeman, a Wesleyan Methodist Minister, founded the first law school in Nigeria (Lawal, 2007). Other churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church, also joined the school, following the path of the Methodist Church. Thus, the country's first secondary school, the Lagos Anglican Grammar School, was established in 1859 by the Church Missionary Society, followed by the Roman Catholic Mission in 1878 (now St. Gregory College and the Wesleyan Methodist Head of the Congregation in collaboration with the Methodist Boys' High School in Lagos (Nduka, 2004)

Expectedly, the missionary venture in education was borne out of the desire to use the school and its curriculum to reinforce church doctrine. Hence, such schools at that time were largely pious, parochial, and restrictive both in curriculum and organizational principles. Apart from the selfish aim of the missions, the colonial government needed clerks as well as teachers and other manpower required by the colony especially since the importation of all levels of manpower was not only impractical but beyond the budgetary allocations of the colonial government. Therefore, this education was neither the product of the social exigencies of the country nor rooted in the socio-cultural reality of the nation. While at first, it was convenient for the administrators to leave education for the missionaries, they soon realized its futility in achieving their primary objectives. The involvement of the colonial government in education eventually was ostensibly borne out of a need to make education suited to the social needs of the society as well as equip the people of Nigeria mentally and otherwise to meet the challenges of nation-building and self-government.

2.1.2 Concept of Girl-Child Education

Education has to be viewed not as a special privilege but as a fundamental human right. As a right, it is to be exercised by everyone regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, political orientation, economic disparity, nationality or geographical differences, and health barriers (Murtala and Nasiru 2021). Education is known to be a channel to human development. It is a channel through which knowledge, skills, character, values, and attitudes are acquired and transmitted to the next generation. Education exposes one to acquire knowledge about one's environment so as to know the causes of variations in a person or persons, or groups and also for sustainable development in a country (Eze and Eze, 2018).

Within the context of the Nigerian environment, several definitions of the girl-child have been given by different scholars. The National Child Welfare Policy (1989) as cited by Ada (2007) defines the girl-child as a person below 14 years of age. Chibiko (2009), and Juliem, (2018) viewed the girl-child as a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen (18) years of age. This is the age before one becomes a young adult. This period covers the crèche, nursery or early childhood (0–5 years), primary (6–12 years) and secondary school (12–18 years).

Girl-child education simply refers to the process of educating girls of the above-mentioned age grade irrespective of race, religion, or cultural background. The education whether formal or Islamic education enables the girls to have the opportunities that directly or indirectly benefit them and their families in one way or the other to know their rights as human beings. The content of girl-child education should be the reflection of the society's idea of the role assigned to them, (Teigeler, 1985). These are to make them able to have equal opportunity and income in the labor market. The content should be the type that girls bring home from school such as knowledge about health and nutrition and vocational skills that can benefit their family. The girl's education scheme should be as a professional approach towards the eventual move to give all Nigerians the relevant and necessary education for effective economic recovery and social justice. Girls need an education that will help them not only to read and understand the world, and master the 3RS (reading, writing, and arithmetic), but be masters of their lives and makers of their own destinies. They need an education that will help them acquire the necessary analytical skills to understand the fast-changing realities of life, which will give them the confidence and strength to refuse to submit to conditions of indignity and inhumanity. It should be the type of education that will help women form strong groups so that they can gain more control over their lives, break their silence, and make them visible. The learning environment should create an atmosphere that allows women more freedom, which gives them more opportunities to realize their full human potential. Women need an education that will not only help them in the search and acquisition of new skills and knowledge but also help them acquire and strengthen values like justice, equality, honesty, truthfulness, and solidarity. It should also create or release energies in women to act with conviction and courage in their various struggles at different levels. Education should help women to develop an analytical and questioning mind and a scientific approach to understanding the realities around them.

2.1.3 Importance of Girl-Child Education

A Chinese proverb says "if you educate a man, you educate one person. If you educate a woman you educate a nation". According to the World Bank report, "a country with more educated girls and women is not only healthier, but wealthier" (Grant 1993). Girl's education has a way of improving their living standards in particular and national development, generally. According to UNICEF (2003), education is everybody's human right. It means that no girl, no matter how poor her family or her country is, should be excluded from schooling. Educating girls is the best investment for societal development. The short and long-term benefits of education to girls and the society at large include:

1. Educated girls develop essential life skills, such as: self-confidence, the ability to participate effectively in society, and protect themselves from HIV/AIDS infection and other related diseases, sexual exploitation, and pressure for early marriage and childbirth.
2. Educated girls gain the skills and competencies for gainful employment, enabling them to be economically productive members of the society.
3. Educated mothers are more likely to send their children to school, thus promoting continued and lifelong learning.
4. Educated women marry later and have fewer children which they can manage and afford quality education and health.
5. Educated mothers nourish their children better, their children are therefore healthier and child mortality is reduced.
6. Educated women are less likely to die in childbirth because they know the benefits of anti-natal care which they do, and also know the kind of food to eat during pregnancy and after delivery.

2.1.4 Islamic Views on Girl-Child Education

Education in Islam is a divine command for all people, regardless of gender. The Quran and hadiths leave no doubt that women have the responsibility of seeking and increasing knowledge. The importance of knowledge is emphasized in the Holy Quran, and mentioning the word "*ilm*" and its different meanings invites people to think in different ways. In the holy Qur'an, Allah commands men and women to increase their knowledge and punish those who do not learn. The first revelation of our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) begins with the word "read" and says: "Read. Read this from the Lord who created; (He) created man from clotted blood. Read in the name of the Lord who taught by the pen: (He) taught the human being what he did not know." (Q96: 1-5)." Therefore, the principle of the law is that when a commandment is revealed, it includes women even if the masculine gender is physically used. If this principle is not supported, commands such as prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and alms, which are the conditions of Islam, are not valid for women because they are given all in the commandment of masculine gender. Women are also expected to act and comply with these rules and regulations because God Almighty and the Holy Prophet (SAW) use the

masculine form to describe most of the commandments, women also are bound to act and follow those rules and regulations.

Girl-child education is a divine duty, as it was stated in the hadith of Ibn Majah, where the Prophet (SAW) said: "Seeking knowledge is the duty of every Muslim male and female." In this hadith, it is stated that the education of girls in Islam is one of the fundamental rights of every person—sacred rights such as life, property, religion, wisdom, honor, and family. Girls' education is important to their beliefs because it increases their ability to use their skills, gives them perspective, and makes them better members of society. Education here is not limited to reading and writing skills, but also includes the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and values in various fields that will enable girls to make an immediate and meaningful contribution to their social, material, and physical health.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) never opposed the education of girls because the first school in Islamic history was founded by him after the Battle of Badr. Seventy enemy soldiers were captured during the battle. These prisoners are literate people. Our Prophet declared that if every captive could teach ten children of Medina to be able to read and write, regardless of boy or girl, they would be saved and released.

2.1.5 Contribution of Girl's Education in Islamic History

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) Invested in the Education of Girls

Since the early days of Islam, educated women have attracted the attention of good and privileged citizens. The Prophet (SAW) was committed to educating women and girls and encouraged their wives and daughters to study and get educated. He organized courses for women who frequently attended public meetings to receive knowledge from the Prophet (SAW). The women in his family were educated not only in Islamic sciences but also in other fields such as medicine, poetry, and mathematics. He organized command training for women and met with them once a week. This is backed by a hadith Sahih Al-Bukhari number 101 narrated by Abu Sa'id Al-Kudri: "Some women requested the Prophet (SAW) to fix a day for them as the men were taking all of his time. On that he promised them one day for religious lessons and commandments....." In a similar hadith of the same Sahih Bukhari number 2547, where Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari reported that; the Prophet (SAW) said, "He who has a slave-girl and teaches her good manners and improves her education and then manumits and marries her, will get double reward; and any slave who observes Allah's right and his master's right will get a double reward."

Muslim Women Contributed to Hadith Scholarship and Islamic Sciences

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in 632, the guidance of his wives Hafsa, Ummu Habiba, Maymuna, Umm Salama, 'A'isha and others was instrumental to understanding and practicing the life of the Prophet and maintaining it in the historical memory of the Islamic community. Authoritative hadith collections, such as Sahih Bukhari, could not have been completed without the efforts and contributions of these women. Mohammed Akram Nadwi, in his work Al-Muhaddithat: "The Women Scholars in Islam",

identifies more than eight thousand female hadith scholars throughout Islamic history. These female scholars often achieve high status in various religious fields and teach courses for men and women.

Muslim Women Founded Universities and Schools

Women were founders and patrons of schools and other higher educational institutions. For example, the University of Al-Qarawayyin, the oldest continuing university in the world, was founded in 859 in Morocco by Fatima Al Fihri. The school was a famous center of learning, leading in sciences, philosophy, and Islamic studies, where Muslim and non-Muslim scholars such as Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd, Jewish philosopher Maimonides, and Pope Sylvester II, who is said to have introduced Arabic numerals to Europe, studied. Dhayfa Khatun (d.1242) was a Muslim woman who, in addition to her political and social roles, sponsored learning in Aleppo and founded two schools such as: al-Firdaous School, specializing in Islamic studies and Islamic law, and the Khankah School, specializing in Shariah and other fields.

Muslim Women's Contribution in Medicine and Health

Women have been working in the field of medicine since the time of the Prophet. Rufaida al-Aslamia (d.620) was probably the first known female nurse and surgeon. She built traveling caravans that served the community in times of war and peace. She was involved in many social services, helped the poor and needy, and gave medical education to many companions of the Prophet. Shifa bint Abdullah, formerly known as Laila, is known as "Al-Shifa" (the healer) for her skills. The tradition of female nurses and surgeons continues from the 17th century to the present day. Adamu (2020) found that globally, patients under the care of female doctors and nurses were more likely to recover early from their ailments. This is because, in healthcare, women treat patients not only physically but also psychologically with social and emotional care. Women are said to be more affectionate, emotional, and passionate. The girl-child education provides women with information on healthcare management.

2.1.6 Attitudes of Society Towards Girl-child Education

Generally speaking, northern Nigerian girls do not have the opportunity to go to school early due to gender discrimination and cultural norms. They are pampered and kept at home to cook, marry, have children, run the house, and work for men. The National Report on Research and Policy on Higher Education in Nigeria (SAPA, 1990) shows that inequality in education still favors men, while illiteracy among women remains significant. In 1990, literate women constituted about 39.5% of the female population. This rate for men was 63.3%. The report also states that 26.23% of one million women in Nigeria are illiterate (SAPA 1990). Dubacy (1980) stated that there are fewer girls than boys at all levels of education in Nigeria. The lowest schooling rates for girls occur in regions with the lowest schooling rates for boys; This is happening all over the country of Nigeria, especially in the northern part. Similarly, primary school students are most likely to be in rural areas and areas where education has recently expanded.

In the past, Nigerian women were treated as slaves by men. A few years ago, education in northern Nigeria was only for men due to the economically and politically male-dominated society (Ibrahim, 1999). When someone complains about only having a daughter, it is a sign of ignorance or indifference. Some men make the same mistake by pushing their wives away from marriage because they don't know God's gift and purpose. Some of them send their wives out of their houses simply because they give birth only to daughters and live a miserable life. Christian Women's Mirror (2003) says that women's negative behavior unfortunately causes many children to fail to reach higher levels educationally, socially, physically, and spiritually. Many parents can reap the rewards of neglecting or pushing their daughters away so that sons, who are seen as more important and valuable to the family, go to school. Ironically, most male heirs are often disappointed by their parents. The Population Manual (1999:9) explains that at least one in three girls worldwide will experience beating, sexual assault, or other forms of educational abuse in their lifetime. Abusers are often family members. Gender-based violence is considered a serious problem for human health and a violation of human rights. There is a perception in most Nigerian societies that girls' education has nothing to do with their world. It is also believed that no matter how educated a woman is, she will find herself in the kitchen, which is her workplace (Hall, 2008)

2.1.7 Problems of Girl-Child Education in Nigeria

Over the years, the role of women in Nigerian society has been perceived as childbearing and family management. For this reason, in most developed countries, men are directed to jobs in technical and scientific fields, while women are directed to work at home. In Nigeria, the relationships and activities of Nigerian men and women are governed by traditional culture and traditions, and men's love takes precedence over women's love. Women are in a subordinate position, especially at the society and family level, where boys are ahead of girls. Similarly, Agwagah and Agule (2009); Offorma (2009); Alabi et al. (2012) stated that some parents prefer certain subjects and that girls' attitudes towards mathematics are not good; teachers' behavior is not good for students, teaching method is not appropriate, government/society is not adequate. With the participation of girls in STM, it is possible to give importance to girls' education. The perception that girls' education is secondary to boys' education in some societies and some religious organizations can also affect women at all levels of education. Additionally, the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2007) states that poverty, early marriage, and teenage pregnancy; lack of education; culture and religion; gender bias in content and instruction; and poor teachers are some of the obstacles to girls' education

Other problems of girl-child education include access to education: This access to education is only about the right to education. It includes the opportunity, ease, and ability to receive education. It is true that many governments create policies for the education of their citizens, but most of these policies do not include the special characteristics of girls. In such cases, girls' access to education, which is an important human right, maybe denied (Chibiko, 2009). Research shows that despite intense efforts towards this goal, millions of girls are still out of school. Okeke, Nzewi and Njoku (2008) stated that there are child labor, poverty and lack of

money, pursuit of wealth, slavery, unemployment, family breakdown, child labor at home, and other things that affect girls' education. Research on the National Literacy Survey by the Bureau of National Statistics (2010) shows that girls' educational opportunities still lag behind those of boys, with women's education being 81.2% lower than men's and 88.1% lower than boys'. Retention and Release UNICEF (2004) argues that girls' education can lead to greater cohesion, stronger families, better services, better child health, and participation in good governance. Despite the positive impact of education on the country's development, research results show that girls drop out of school more often than boys

However, Osakwe, Osagie, Madunagu, and Usman (1995) found that Nigerian girls do not have fair opportunities in education due to many factors such as religion, culture, economy, work, and school. Approximately 7.3 million children are out of school in Nigeria, and 62% of them are girls (UNICEF 2004). The same UNICEF report states that girls are far ahead of boys in primary school at 76%, while the rate for boys is 85%. This gender gap means that more girls than boys drop out of school every year. This shows that the majority of children who do not go to school are girls. UNICEF (2003) published an alarming report on Sub-Saharan Africa; The number of girls out of school here increased from 20 million in 1990 to 24 million in 2002. The report also states that 83% of all girls in the world do not attend school. It lives in sub-Saharan Africa. - Saharan Africa, South Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific. Mohammed (2004) similarly suggests that girls can drop out of school if there is a good marriage. Early marriage is a cultural practice that prevents girls from going to school. Some parents protect their little girls by giving them to old friends who have money. Some of the girls who try to escape from such marriages are dragged into disaster. Egbochuku (2002) believes that efforts to ensure that young people returning to school can continue their lifelong learning will close the door to poverty and deprivation, and know when to open the door to financial success, vitality, success, and prosperity. Alike and Egbochuku (2009) found that girls' socioeconomic status places many limitations on their ability to continue their education. In fact, they say, girls' health outcomes in particular can have a direct and significant impact on educational attainment

2.2 Review of Empirical Studies.

Studies have been conducted in an attempt to evaluate the influence of religious attitudes on girl-child education in Nigeria. The reviews aimed at identifying similarities and differences in order to fill in the gaps left by other studies.

Alabi, T. and Alabi O.S. (2013) conducted a study on Female Education: A sociological analysis of girl child education in Nigeria. The researchers concluded that educating the girl child is a social development policy that works and a long-term investment that yields an exceptionally high return. They also recommend that all the stakeholders in women's affairs and development should focus on the provision of formal education to women as well as improving their working conditions while at the same time facilitating their access to resources like land, credit, and technology as a way of enhancing their relevance in the society

Also, Immaculata, G.U. and Arit, O.A. (2014) conducted a study on changing trends in societal attitudes toward Girl-Child education. The researchers discovered that because of gender discrimination and cultural barriers, the girl-child was not allowed the opportunity to go to school early in Africa. But In Nigeria today, the inferior states of the girl-child is gradually diminishing. Nigerians are encouraging girl-child education now by setting up some strategies for coordinating efforts in this direction among many sectors of the society and at community and national levels. They further recommended that: Parents should stop pressuring their daughters to early marriage as a source of income to the family, government should remove societal barriers to girl-child participation in school, and also, parents should have the number of children they can carter for and be responsible for their proper upbringing until marriageable age.

However, Osarenren-Osaghae, R.I., Imhangbe, O.S and Irabor Q.O. (2019) conducted a study on Relationship between social challenges and the education of the girl-child as perceived by female academics in the tertiary institutions of Edo State, Nigeria. It was deduced from the study that five out of the seven factors looked at, constituted challenges against the education of a girl-child, they include: level of understanding of the girl-child education, level of acceptance of the girl-child education, parental illiteracy, ignorance about the accrued benefits, cultural and traditional practices. They recommended that vigorous awareness campaigns, and enlightenment programs by all stakeholders especially the Government, should be mounted up, using door-to-door campaigns, social media, print media, etc. to get to all the nooks and crannies of the nation, to foster understanding of this wonderful concept behind the girlchild education.

Abu-Saeed K., Abu-Saeed M. B., and Parakoyi D. (2012) conducted a research on the perception, attitude, and practices of parents in Okene, Nigeria towards girl-child education. They discovered that the perception of parents towards girl-child education was also very good with almost all respondents saying that educating a girl child is important. Still, it faces challenges of early marriage among females, poverty among households, and pregnancy among girls of school age.

The reviewed studies above indicate that girl child education in Nigeria is facing one challenge or the other, but none of them directly investigated on the religious attitudes on girl child education to know what religions said about girl child education. That is what attracted the researcher to conduct the study on the effect of religious attitudes on girl child education: a comparative study between the two major religions in Nigeria such as Islam and Christianity.

2.3 Summary and Conclusion

History of Girl-child education in Nigeria, concept of girl-child education, importance of girl-child education, Islamic views on girl-child education, societal attitudes towards girl-child education, problems of girl-child education in Nigeria, and review of empirical studies. It can be seen from the areas discussed in this chapter, that girl child education has many and different influences that hinder its effectiveness in Nigeria specifically Katsina state. All of

the literature reviewed above revealed different challenges faced by girl child education but none of them related it with the fault of any religious influence.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter comprises the research design, population, sample, and sampling technique, as well as instrumentation.

3.1 Research Design

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach; it combines both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Primary data was collected through surveys, using a questionnaire for Islamic religious scholars on their views on girl-child education while secondary data was collected through literature reviews on the existing reports related to girl-child education.

3.2 Population

The population for the study comprises Islamic religious scholars in Katsina state. Due to the security situation of the state, the researcher limited the population of the study to the Katsina metropolis only. Both the male and female gender are included in order to avoid gender bias in getting the responses.

3.3 Sample

The samples of this study are some selected Islamic religious scholars in the Katsina metropolis. Due to the security challenges of the area, only scholars that reside in the Katsina metropolis are selected by the researcher through a stratified sampling technique. The sample of fifty-three scholars was selected from four regional areas of the metropolis such as: Sabon Titin Kwado from the eastern part of the city, Shagari Low-cost from the western part of the city, Sabuwar Unguwa from the northern part of the city, and Kofar Sauri from the southern part of the city. The selection was randomly made based on the *madrasas* the scholars teach in the selected areas.

3.4 Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection is a questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale: strongly agreed, agreed, undecided, disagreed, and strongly disagreed. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Research and Statistics. After the validation, it was reduced to two scales such as agreed and disagreed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation of Results

4.1 Introduction

Fifty-three copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents. The researcher ensured 100% return of the questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Cumulative percentages.

4.2 Data Presentation

Table 1.1: Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
30-40	23	43.00	43.00
41-50	19	36.00	79.00
51 and above	11	21.00	100
Total	53	100%	

Source: Field report

The table above shows the age range of the respondents. It shows that 23 of the respondents fall within the range of 30-40 years of age which represents 43% of the respondents. 19 of the respondents fall within the range of 41-50 years which represents 36% of the respondents and 11 of them fall within the range of 51 years and above which represents 21% of the respondents. This indicates that most of the Islamic scholars that responded to the questionnaire are within 30-40 years of age and they are considered to be young scholars that are up-to-date and experienced in terms of educational activities. This gives the researcher a great opportunity to gather useful information regarding the research.

Table 1.2 Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Male	41	77.36	77.36
Female	12	22.64	100
Total	53	100	

Source: field report

The above table shows that 41 out of the 53 respondents are male which covers 77.36% of the respondents while the remaining 12 are female which covers 22.64% of the respondents. This shows that the study comprises both male and female Islamic scholars in order to get responses from both sides to avoid one-sided opinions.

Table 1.3 Educational Distributions of Respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Primary Education	4	8.00	8.00
Secondary Education	9	17.00	25.00
Tertiary Education	40	75.00	100
Total	53	100	

The above table indicated that 4 out of the respondents had primary education only as their educational qualification which covers 8% of the sample of the study, 9 out of them had a secondary certificate as their highest qualification which covers 17% of the sample while 40 out of the respondents have post-secondary school certificate (NCE/BSC/BED/MSC/MED) as their highest qualification which covers 75% of the sample of the study. This indicates that most of the respondents are highly educated.

Table 1.4: Islamic Scholar’s Perceptions on the Role of Islamic Religion in Influencing Girl-Child Education?

Items	Frequency		Percentage	
	A	D	A	D
Islamic religion goes against girl child education	10	43	19.00	81.00
Islamic religion supports only Qur’anic education	33	20	62.2	37.8
Islamic religion encourages girl child education	38	15	72.00	28.00
Girls should attend girls-only school	50	3	94.00	6.00
Girl child education contributes to the development of the country	39	14	74.00	26.00
With your current knowledge and experience do you agree that girls should be sent to school	50	3	94.3	5.7

Source: Fieldwork

From the above table, it has been revealed that 81% of the respondents did not agree that the Islamic religion is against girl child education, and 62% of them agreed that the Islamic religion supports only Qur’anic education. 72% of the Islamic religion scholars who responded to the questionnaire agreed that Islamic education encourages girl-child education, and 94% of them believed that girls should attend girls-only schools without mixing with boys. Also, 74% of the respondents believed that girl-child education contributes to the development of a country and 94% of them agreed that they can allow their girl children to go to formal school.

Table 1.5: Islamic Scholars’ Perception on Beliefs that Hinder Girl Child Education

Items	Frequency		Percentage	
	A	D	A	D
Girls education has no importance in their lives	12	41	22.6	77.35
Islamic religion sees girls going to school as indecent	32	21	60.4	39.6
The holy Qur’an did not support girl child education	0	53	00.00	100
The Hadiths did not support girl child education	2	51	3.8	96.2
Investing in girl child education is prohibited	20	33	37.7	62.3
Girls' education should be limited to the primary level only	40	13	75.5	24.5

Source: Fieldwork

The results in the above table revealed that 77.35% of the respondents believed that the education of a girl child has no importance in their lives, and 60.4% of them believed that girls who attend formal school are indecent. All the respondents disagreed with the view that the holy Qur'an did not support girl-child education, while 96.2% believed that Hadiths of the holy prophet support girl-child education. Also, 62.3% of the scholars that responded to the questionnaire did not believe in investing in girl-child education, and that girl-child education should be limited to primary education according to 75% of the scholars.

Table 1.6 Islamic Scholars' Perception of Cultural and Societal Influence on Girl-Child Education

Items	Frequency		Percentage	
	A	D	A	D
Girls should never be left to go out of their houses*	19	34	35.84	64.15
Girls should never attend formal school	21	32	39.62	60.38
Girls education is against the ethics of Hausa community	42	11	79.2	20.8
The girls that attended formal school are rude	10	43	18.9	81.1
Girls education stops the girls from getting married at the right time	22	31	41.5	58.5
Educated girls dominate their households	13	40	24.5	75.5
Educated girls equalize themselves with their husbands	42	11	79.24	20.8
Girls should be sent to hawk instead of schooling	0	53	0.00	100
Hausa culture encourages girl-child education at all levels	28	25	52.8	47.2
The rules of the Hausa community are against sending girls to school	23	30	43.4	56.6

Source: Fieldwork

The above table revealed that 64.15% of the respondents believed that girls can leave their houses to go to schools, while 60.38% of them believed that girls should never attend schools. 79.2% of them agreed that girl child education is against the ethics of the Hausa community. Also, 81.1% of the Islamic scholars did not see girls who attend formal schools as rude, and 58.5% of the scholars who responded to the questionnaire believed that girl-child education cannot stop them from getting married at the right time. More so, 75.5% disagreed with the idea that educated girls dominate their households, while 79.24% of them believed that educated girls equalize themselves with their husbands. None of the respondents prefer girls to hawk instead of school. Hence, 52.8% of the scholars who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the Hausa community encourages girl-child education at all levels while 56.6% of them did not agree that the rules of the Hausa community are against sending girls to school.

4.3. Discussion of Findings

From the above data presented, it has been discovered that the Islamic religion scholars revealed that Islamic religion is not against girl child education, the religion directly or indirectly gave girls-child access to education in both Islamic and Western education. Islamic religion did not go against girl-child education. The scholars who responded to the questionnaire said they would allow their children to access both Western and Islamic education due to the fact that the Islamic religion did not go against it. So with this, it can be

revealed that the Islamic religion encourages girl-child education. This finding is in line with the findings of Immaculata, G.U. and Arit, O.A. (2014) who discovered that, in Nigeria today, the inferior status of the girl-child is gradually diminishing. Nigerians are encouraging girl-child education now by setting up some strategies for coordinating efforts in this direction among many sectors of society and at community and national levels.

From the findings of the paper, it was discovered that Islamic religious scholars believed that girl-child education has no importance in the lives of the girl child, they also revealed that girls who attended schools behave rudely in society. Even though, they all believed that the Qur'an and hadiths of the Prophet both supported girl-child education directly or indirectly, even though they believed that the education of a girl-child should be limited to the primary level only. In this regard, Muhammad I, (2016) highlighted that education in Islam aims to produce a decent human being who is talented in delivering his duties as a servant of Allah and His vicegerent (*khalifah*) on earth.

However, the Hausa community did not go against the education of a girl-child according to the result obtained from this study. This finding is contrary to the findings of Osamiro E, Rita O, and Victor E (2015) who discovered that religious and cultural beliefs have a negative impact on girl-child education in Nigeria. Also, the responses from the scholars revealed that girl child education did not stop them from getting married at the right time. It was also discovered that educated girls neither dominate their households nor equalize themselves with their husbands.

4.4. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study reveals that the Islamic religion has a positive influence on girl child education as almost all the respondents were aware that education is a child's right. Their perception towards girl-child education was also very good with almost all respondents saying that educating a girl child is important. Even though most of them did not support girls going out of their houses anyhow, some even suggested that girl-child education be limited to the primary school level only so that it doesn't stop them from getting married at the right time. The Islamic scholars contacted during the study revealed that both the Qur'an and Hadith supported girl-child education, The Hausa community, as well, did not go against girl-child education because they didn't see it as a factor that stopped them from getting married at the right time and the education of the girls don't make them to equalize themselves with their husbands at home after getting married.

Based on the results discovered above, it is recommended that the Nigerian government at all levels should take responsibility for creating awareness on the importance of girl-child education so parents have the peace of mind that neither Islam nor the Hausa community go against it to enable them to be able to enroll their female children into formal schools. The introduction and implementation of adult education among uneducated parents will enhance a better understanding of the relevance of girl-child education. In addition, the education of a girl child at primary and secondary levels should be made free. Finally, there is a need to conduct similar studies in other geographical locations in order to make generalizations on

the influence of the Islamic religion on girl-child education in Nigeria as this study is limited to Katsina state only.

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