

# Educational Neglect and Societal Development in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *The aim of this study was to examine educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria with focus on Borno State. Descriptive survey research method was deployed for the purpose of this study. 150 respondents participated in this study. However, only 120 questionnaires were returned and found to be useful for analysis. The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire titled “Educational Neglect and Societal Development Questionnaire Scale” (ENSDQS). A 2-point Likert Scale was developed and validated to collect information from the respondents. The data collected was analyzed with basic descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage. Mean rating statistic technique was used for the analysis of the research hypotheses. The core findings from the results obtained showed that there is a significant relationship between Educational Neglect and Societal Development. Further findings identified gender factors, economic factors and socio-cultural factors as key factors influencing educational neglect in developing society such as Nigeria. This study recommended that the Government should introduce community enlightenment programmes, feeding programmes and compensation fee in society where educational neglect is rampant and is gaining acceptance among the people as a culture.*

**Keywords:** Educational Neglect, Societal Development, Gender factors, Economic factors, Socio-cultural factors

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The FCT minister in a maiden speech during the Republic of Korea Envoy to Nigeria identified educational neglect as the major problem plaguing development in Nigeria. He said education is the bedrock of development, adding that no nation, desirous of meaningful growth, could afford to neglect education sector. “If we are to meet our potential as a great nation, we must refocus our energy on the education sector by redirecting our efforts towards ensuring that education is given the attention it deserves.

Revamping of education is the roadmap to development in Nigeria society. Neglect of education in our society is the cause of myriad of problems confronting development in Nigeria. Every society is faced with a peculiar problem and education is a key instrument that can help address the problem. The ability of people to solve society problems is tied to investment on education. Societal Development is strongly tied to education and training. No society can attain development without quality education. Education is sine qua non for human and nation’s development. Education is light and life, as human beings cannot function properly without it.

At a time when countries in America, Europe, and Asia are paying more and more attention to university education through infrastructural development, targeted funding, breakthrough research, and faculty and student exchange programmes, African countries are squabbling over political positions, with their elite being consumed in power struggle and wealth accumulation, while only paying lip service to university education.

Human beings are to educate and to be educated. The primary aim of education is to sustain individual and societal improvement. This process contains both tangible and moral dimensions. Educational programs and policies play a pivotal role in these social and individual progress. Social progress clearly indicates a general development in the community in terms of economic, social and cultural aspects. In sociological terminology, social development is used for a concept displaying all positive developments in the social construct. To put it differently, this is to state a society which is considered to be progressing and changing from a fairly less decent situation to a favorably better conditions with respect to economic, social and political issues.

Education is fundamental to development and growth. The human mind makes possible all development achievements, from health advances and agricultural innovations to efficient public administrations and private sector growth. For developing countries to reap these benefits fully, they need to unleash the potential of the human mind. And there is no better tool for doing so than education. Societal development is largely dependent upon a country’s ability to effectively develop and utilize its education system. Such development is better realized through implementation of educational plans, policies and programme. Education is considered a pivotal of societal development in Nigeria.

## Statement of the Problem

One of the problems facing Nigeria is problem of neglecting quality education for its younger citizens. Previous research findings observed that ineffective planning, accountability, poor management of resources and undefined curriculum are the major problems facing policy makers of education in

Nigeria. Government negative attitude to the development of education is reflected in the government inability to budget appropriately to education. For instance, government allocated paltry sum of N426.53billion which is 8.7% of total budget for the 2013 fiscal year. Educational neglect is caused by a number of factors in human society namely the family, religion, culture, economic, gender inequality and corruption. There is virtually little or no literature on educational neglect in Nigeria. Therefore, this study is set out to carry a research on educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study investigated educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria. Other objectives are as follows;

- Discover the relationship between educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria.
- Identify the factors influencing educational neglect in modern developing society such as Nigeria.
- Assess whether there are specific counselling interventions that could be applied in checking the problem.

### **Research Questions**

The following research question were sought so as to provide solutions to the problems of the study.

1. Is there a significant relationship between educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria?
2. What are the factors influencing educational neglect in modern developing society such as Nigeria?

### **Scope of the Study**

This study examined educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria with focus on Borno State as a case study. The study was conducted in Maiduguri, Ngala and Mafa in Borno State.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This paper review three theories on educational development namely gender theories, economic theories and socio-cultural theories.

### **Gender Theories**

The theoretical framework for this study is based on a combination of critical theory and feminist education theory (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003; Olesen, 2005). On the one hand, critical theory known for its ability to challenge the status quo is predicated on empowering human beings to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class, or gender. To examine the lived reality of social life, Crotty

(2003) believes that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting.

Feminist education theory, on the other hand, is based on the premise that diverse and oppressive situations that surround women inform and affect women's lives. Feminist education theory serves as a lens to understand gender disparity in education, and how these differences play out in limited access to education, which ultimately results in unequal educational opportunity. Critical research and feminist education theory tend to expose the forces that prevent individuals and groups from shaping decisions that crucially affect their lives (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003, cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 437).

### **Economic Theories**

Education is essential for national development. This is particularly so because economists now realize that development in the broadest sense is to improve the quality of people's life. This realization takes modern Economy beyond the mere traditional focus on growth of Gross Domestic product (GDP). Thus, there is a broad agreement that national development should focus more on increasing the general well-being of the people (Preston, 2004).

Okeem (2005) has also pointed out another approach to national development which focused on social transformation through Education. Proponents of this school of thought believed that mass education will eradicate illiteracy, which is regarded as the basic feature of under development and then provide not only an enlightened and well informed citizenry, but also high level skilled manpower – two features of developed nations. Umoh and Ekanem (2013) stated that earlier conception of national development was focused primarily on the modernization of physical facilities. In his view, this approach to national development had to fail because as he argued “development is a state of mind” – This means that development involves the psychology of individual citizens who must, beside other things, be prepared to cope mentally with the use of sophisticated facilities (Preston, 2004).

Modernization theory states that the greater the number of individuals exposed to modernizing institutions, the greater the level of individual modernity attained by the society. Once a critical segment of the population changes in this way, the pace of society modernization and economic development quickens. Thus, education through its effect on individual value and benefits sets into motion the necessary building blocks for a more productive work force which will engender sustained economic growth.

### **Socio-Cultural Theories**

Sociocultural approaches to the process of learning are increasingly being applied by educationalists. Sociocultural theorists argue that individuals cannot be considered in

isolation from their social and historical context and therefore it is necessary to look at the society and the developments occurring at a given time. Two principal agencies, the family and the school powerfully shape children's learning experiences. The influence of these two agencies is constrained by the wider social and cultural systems into which they are embedded. There is great diversity in cultural backgrounds, social conditions, family arrangements and school organization.

Socio-cultural theory embraces the elements of social Constructivism Theory, Social learning Theory and Cognitive learning Theories. In the model of social-cultural perspective, reality is formed by a social consensus and is based on social interaction. For the knowledge to be truthful, it must match the social consensus and be functional (Bandura, 1977) school learning and female academic performance in particular, is built on what the community knows based on their cultural expectations of women. This theory will help to explain how gender gap occurs in education. The perception of teachers, students, parents and religious leaders on the issues of the cultural values of smart girls; and the general perception of community's expectations of girls lead to female performance or underperformance.

Jane Butigah Atayi (2008) observed that Parents' demand for the education of their daughters is low, reflecting both cultural norms and girls' work in and around the home. This is worsened by cultural perceptions of girls as child minders, marriage material and a burden to the family. Some parents decided in many cultures that, education is not worthwhile for their daughters who will move into their husbands' families when they marry and that the gains in productivity or income due to education will accrue to the families of the sons-in-law rather than to them.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research type. This design is suitable for the study because the study attempted a survey and description of the opinions of a large number of people affecting by educational neglect in the Northern part of Nigeria.

#### **Population and sample**

The target populations for this study were the Hausa/Fulani adult males and females in the Northern part of Nigeria. The sample consists of 120 participants. This sample was selected from Borno State and comprises of three Local Government Areas namely Maiduguri, Ngala and Mafa. The reason for the purposive selection was to obtain proper information on the practices of educational neglect and societal development. Three local government areas were randomly selected for the study. In each local government area 50 subjects were used as subjects of the study; this gave

a total of 150 subjects, but only 120 was found useful for the whole study. The subjects were made up of adult males and females, educated and non-educate and subjects from both rural and urban settings of the state.

#### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used for the study was a self-designed questionnaire titled —Educational Neglect and Societal Development questionnaire (ENSDQ). The questionnaire consists of four sections. Section A demands for personal data of the respondents. While sections B, C and D are meant to tap information on factors influencing educational neglect in developing society in the areas under review. Each of sections B, C, and D consists of 5 items requesting information on the three factors of socio-cultural, religious and economic factors influencing educational neglect.

The validity of this instrument was attained by subjecting it to scrutiny of psychometric experts. These experts authenticated the instrument. However, the reliability of the instrument was established by the researcher using the test-retest method within an interval of two weeks. The reliability coefficient was 0.71. Which was considered high enough for this study?

#### **Procedure**

The questionnaires were administered in the different local government areas by the researchers with the support of some trained research assistants. With the permission of authorities in each local government area, the administration of the questionnaire was done within a period of four weeks. It should be noted that the researchers administered 150 copies of the questionnaire, but only 120 were returned and found useful for analysis.

#### **Data analysis**

The data collected on this study were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages for descriptive analysis while mean score rating was used for the testing of the hypothesis.

### **4. RESULT AND DATA ANALYSIS**

The results of this study are presented in the tables below according to the research questions raised and tested in the study.

#### **Descriptive analysis**

Research Question 1: Is there a significant relationship between educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria.

**Table 4.1: Relationship Between Educational Neglect and Societal Development**

S/N	Educational Neglect	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Investment in citizens education will promote economic development	99	82.5	21	17.5
2.	Education is critical to societal development	109	90.83	11	9.17
3.	The primary aim of education is to improve individual and the society	93	77.5	27	22.5
4.	Neglect of education in our society is the cause of myriad of problems confronting development in Nigeria	95	79.16	25	20.84
5.	Education holds the key to solving society problem in developing countries	113	94.16	7	5.84

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 4.1 shows the analysis of participants' perception of the relationship between educational neglect and societal development. From this table, it is revealed that majority of the participants believed that there is a correlation between educational neglect and societal development. Items 6 and 8 on education is critical to societal development and the fact that they believe that educations holds the key to solving

society problem in developing countries attracted the positive perception of the participants. They are the major key determinants of the relationship between educational neglect and societal development.

Research Questions 2: What are the factors influencing educational neglect in modern developing society such as Nigeria?

**Table 4.2: Relationship between gender, economic, socio-cultural factors and educational neglect.**

S/N	Educational Neglect	Yes	%	No	%
<b>Gender Factors</b>					
1	Girl child education is morally condemned	91	75.83	29	24.17
2	The belief of parents that girls can generate money for the family	104	86.67	16	13.33
3	Girls are often engaged in works by parents thereby discouraging their education	108	90.00	12	10.00
4	Boys often become the bread winner of the family	112	93.33	8	6.67
5	Parents valued Qura'anic education for girls than western education	115	95.83	5	4.17
<b>Economic Factors</b>					
6	Socio-economic status of families inhibit girl-child education	97	80.83	23	19.17
7	Parents see school fees payment as a burden	100	83.33	20	16.67
8	Often, girls are made to act guides to beggars thereby generating income	102	85.00	18	15.00
9	We are low income earners	107	89.16	13	10.84
10	Girls are involved in hawking and daily generation of income	89	74.16	31	25.84
<b>Socio-cultural factors</b>					
11	Family influence promotes education neglect	111	92.50	9	7.50
12	Positive attitude towards boy child education only	113	94.16	7	5.84
13	Females are culturally meant for domestic works in that area	93	77.50	27	22.50
14	Lack of education among parents	97	80.83	23	19.17
15	Child's right abuses among parents	86	71.66	34	28.34

Source: Field Survey (2018)

Table 4.2 shows the analysis of participants' perception of the factors influencing educational neglect in the Northern part of Nigeria. From this table, it is revealed that majority of the participants believed that the three factors identified significantly influence educational neglect in the Northern

part of Nigeria. The three factors identified as influencing educational neglect are gender factor, economic factors and socio-cultural factors. Item 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 shows the analysis of participant's perception of the gender factors influencing educational neglect in the Northern part of Nigeria. Item 6, 7,

8, 9 & 10 revealed that majority of the participants believed that the five economic factors identified significantly promote educational neglect in the Northern part of Nigeria. While item 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15 indicate the five socio-cultural factors influencing educational neglect in Nigeria. Educational Neglect is gaining strong hold in Northern Nigeria and thus has damning consequence on social development of Nigeria economy. Furthermore, it has great effect on National Security and peace of Nigeria.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This study investigated educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria with focus on Borno State, Nigeria. The findings result revealed that there is a significant relationship between educational neglect and societal development in Nigeria. It was found that there are certain factors influencing educational neglect in developing society such as Nigeria Namely gender factors, religious factors and socio-cultural factors. These results were further validated by most of the respondent who indicate that educations holds the key to solving society problem in developing countries.

Based on the discovering observe from this study, we recommend as follows;

- i. There still remains a need for further research on the factors promoting educational neglect among women's education in Nigeria from a comparative perspective across the six geopolitical zone in the country. Most studies on women's education in SSA have employed qualitative methods. Future research may consider a mixed method approach. Furthermore, a study focusing on a particular ethnic group may throw more light on details and dynamics that were not available in this study.
- ii. The Education curriculum should be innovated to meet the reality of the demands for societal Development.
- iii. The Government should introduce community enlighten programme, feeding programmes and compensation fee in society where educational neglect is rampant and is gaining acceptance among the people as a culture.

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