Addressing the Root Causes of School Dropout among Adolescent Girls in Kaduna State

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Abstract:- Addressing the Root Causes of School Dropout Among Adolescent Girls in Kaduna State is a critical endeavour that requires a deep understanding of the multifaceted challenges these girls face in pursuing their education. In Kaduna State, like many regions worldwide, adolescent girls are disproportionately affected by factors such as poverty, cultural norms, and limited access to quality education. This article delves into the various socio-economic, cultural, and health-related issues that contribute to the high dropout rates among adolescent girls in Kaduna State, aiming to shed light on the complexities of the situation and explore potential solutions for sustainable change.

Keywords:- School Dropout; Adolescent Girls; Kaduna State; Root Causes.

I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights recognises education as a fundamental human right (Şener, 2021). The term "education" refers to the process by which a person gains the correct information, perspective, value system, and conduct to carry out their civic duties to the best of their ability (Dunne, 2021). Additionally, it is believed that education is the bedrock of every country's growth and that no nation can progress without educated individuals (Mbagwu and Igbegiri, 2019). So, no nation can afford to disregard its citizens' education, particularly that of girls. "Educate a man and you educate an individual, but educate a woman and you educate a nation," goes the adage. This is in keeping with the reality that a girl's education is crucial to a nation's, a community's, and an individual's progress in many areas, including family life, economic independence, social standing, and job prospects (Walker et al., 2019).

It is morally imperative that girls, like boys, have access to quality education that will allow them to reach their full potential as individuals and as members of society. Everyone has the right to an education that allows them to reach their maximum potential, according to the World Conference on Education for All that took place in Jomtien, Thailand, from March 5th to the 9th, 1990. The World Education Forum, which took place in Dakar from April 26th to the 28th, 2000, said that all children, and especially girls, should have access to a quality, comprehensive education by that year.

The term "school dropout" refers to a student's decision to stop attending a school before graduating, for reasons other than death. A well-documented societal issue, dropping out of school is often linked to delinquency (misbehaviour/law-breaking) and poor academic performance. According to Gil et al. (2019), everyone who does not complete high school is considered a school dropout. Across the globe, there are a lot of factors that contribute to the exclusion of girls from school or their decision to drop out. Poverty, pregnancy, peer pressure, and the pursuit of financial gain were found to be the causes of secondary school dropouts among females in Cross Rivers State, Nigeria, according to research by Agi and Emelie (2023). Because of variations in socio-cultural contexts, particularly religion, these triggers may work differently in various places. According to Abubakar (2023), who studied female dropout rates in Yobe State, Nigeria, some of the causes include: low socioeconomic status, family discord, the loss of a breadwinner, gender inequality, unintended pregnancies, pressure to marry at a young age, parents' bad behaviour, parents' intoxication, and parents' lack of education.

The issue of adolescent girls' dropout in Kaduna State is a multifaceted and complex challenge that requires urgent attention and intervention. The factors contributing to this trend are varied, including socio-economic disparities, cultural norms, early marriage, lack of access to education, inadequate school facilities, and gender discrimination. Adolescent girls face barriers such as poverty, household responsibilities, societal expectations, and limited opportunities for continuing their education. These dropouts not only miss out on educational opportunities but also expose themselves to increased vulnerability to early marriages, unplanned pregnancies, and limited economic prospects (Hamidou et al., 2024). Addressing this crucial issue calls for targeted interventions such as improving access to quality education for girls, creating safe learning environments, promoting gender equality policies and programs, increasing community awareness and engagement, providing vocational training opportunities, and skill-building programs tailored to adolescent girls' needs specifically. By addressing these root causes systematically and holistically with the participation of various stakeholders (government agencies, NGOs, community leaders), we can work towards reducing the dropout rate among adolescent girls in Kaduna State and empower them to realize their full potential.

Furthermore, it is essential to address the underlying societal attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate the cycle of adolescent girls' dropout in Kaduna State. This includes challenging traditional gender roles, promoting the value of education for girls, and advocating for policies that protect their rights and ensure equal opportunities. Empowering adolescent girls with knowledge, skills, and confidence is key to breaking the barriers that prevent them from staying in school and pursuing their dreams (Odewusi, 2020). By investing in their education and well-being, we can create a more inclusive and equitable society where every girl has the chance to thrive and contribute to the development of Kaduna State (Ayeni, 2023).

The phenomenon of adolescent girls' dropout in Kaduna State is a critical issue that requires thorough understanding and targeted interventions. As such, dropout rates among adolescent girls in Kaduna State are a pressing issue that needs to be addressed urgently. According to statistics, Kaduna State has one of the highest dropout rates in Nigeria, with adolescent girls being disproportionately affected (Phinos and Chukwueme, 2021). This paper aims to explore the various factors that contribute to adolescent girls dropping out of school in Kaduna State and the implications of this trend on their prospects to proffer possible solutions to the issues.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

As the adage goes, "Educate a woman, and you educate a nation." Therefore, no country can afford to ignore its responsibility to educate its girls. However, when it comes to education, females often face obstacles such as lack of access, inequality, poor performance, and retention/dropout rates. Unfortunately, there are instances when the female kid is coerced into leaving the program before it reaches its completion point. In Gwale Local Government and across Kano state, there is a lot of research on the topic of female-child education. Studies on a variety of topics have been published on the topic of girls' education, including general overviews (Olaniyi, 2021), parents' attitudes towards girls' education (Jacob, 2020), girls' access to education in Kano (Nasidi and Wali, 2023; Kabir et al., 2022), and girls' enrolment in basic education (Ozowuba, 2021). There is a dearth of literature on the topic of female student attrition in Kaduna State. Research in Nembe, Bayelsa State, was the basis of Fente et al. (2023) work on what he dubbed dropout syndrome among females. Despite focussing on rural Kaduna State, Ogundeji et al. (2023) conducted research on Kano. It is clear from the above that the issue of female student attrition in urban Kaduna State is under-researched and under-supported. Given the repeated calls from federal, state, and local governments for parents to provide their daughters with a solid education so that they are prepared to tackle the world as adults, this is especially important for girls. Kaduna State, where this study is based, has implemented several programs, including "free girl-child education" from 2003 to 2011, "free education" from 2011 to 2015, and, most recently, "free and compulsory education for all children" in the state. Then why are so many girls not completing high school? The study's overarching goal is to learn more about why so many female students in Kaduna State stop attending classes.

A dismal and disheartening picture emerges when one considers the school dropout trend in Nigerian schools, especially in the country's far north. This is because school dropouts often render anticipated improvements to the educational system ineffective. Because many people do not finish certain levels of education, educational planners will have a hard time estimating the number of teachers, classrooms, and other facilities needed over a given period at different levels of education. Similarly, economic planners will have a hard time estimating the country's manpower output at different levels of skills if the dropout rate keeps climbing (Akinyoade and Economics, 2019).

➢ *Aim and Objective of the Study*

The major objective of this study is to explore and address the root cause of adolescent girl's school dropout in Kaduna State.

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

➢ *Overview of Dropout Rates among Adolescent Girls in Nigeria*

Dropout rates among adolescent girls in Nigeria are a significant issue that has long-lasting implications for individuals and society as a whole (Ahmed and Yola, 2021). In this essay, I will provide an overview of the factors contributing to high dropout rates among adolescent girls in Nigeria, as well as the consequences of this phenomenon. I will also explore potential solutions to address this problem and improve educational outcomes for adolescent girls in the region.

One of the primary reasons for high dropout rates among adolescent girls in Nigeria is poverty (Effiom and Jacks, 2019). Many families in Nigeria struggle to afford the costs associated with sending their daughters to school, such as uniforms, books, and transportation (Ibeji, 2023). As a result, girls are often forced to drop out of school to help support their families or are married off at a young age to alleviate financial burdens. This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and limits the prospects of adolescent girls in Nigeria. Another contributing factor to high dropout rates among adolescent girls in Nigeria is early marriage and pregnancy (Inah and Uzoigwe, 2024). In Nigeria, child marriage is common, with an estimated 76% of girls married before the age of 18. This often leads to teenage pregnancy and subsequent dropout from school, as pregnant girls are stigmatized and may face barriers to continuing their education. Additionally, the lack of access to reproductive health education and services further exacerbates the problem (Bolarinwa et al., 2022).

Cultural beliefs and societal norms also play a significant role in high dropout rates among adolescent girls in Nigeria (Yewande and Olawunmi, 2023). Girls' lower rates of enrolment and graduation are associated with cultural expectations that they should focus on housework rather than pursuing higher education (Ozowuba, 2021). Additionally, traditional gender roles perpetuate the idea that education is not as important for girls as it is for boys, further limiting opportunities for adolescent girls in Nigeria (Ibeji, 2023). The consequences of high dropout rates among adolescent girls in

Nigeria are far-reaching. Without access to education, girls are more likely to remain trapped in cycles of poverty and dependency, perpetuating intergenerational inequality. Additionally, lack of education limits girls' ability to advocate for their rights and make informed decisions about their futures, leading to increased vulnerability to exploitation and discrimination (Okpokwasili, 2024).

Despite these challenges, there are potential solutions to address high dropout rates among adolescent girls in Nigeria. One key strategy is to increase access to quality education for girls, including reducing financial barriers and providing support services to help girls stay in school (Olaniyi, 2021). This may involve implementing cash transfer programs to incentivize families to keep their daughters in school, as well as providing scholarships and other forms of financial assistance. Another important intervention is to address the root causes of dropout among adolescent girls in Nigeria, such as early marriage and pregnancy (Omoera, 2023). This may involve working with communities to raise awareness about the importance of education for girls and the harmful effects of child marriage and teenage pregnancy. Empowering girls through education and reproductive health education can help them make informed decisions about their futures and break the cycle of poverty and inequality.

➢ *Importance of Addressing Dropout Issue*

Addressing the issue of dropout rates in education is an essential and pressing matter that must be addressed by all stakeholders in the education system. Dropping out of school can have long-lasting and detrimental effects on individuals, families, and society as a whole. As a graduate school student studying education policy and reform, it is crucial to understand the importance of addressing this issue to create a more equitable and successful education system for all students.

First and foremost, addressing the dropout issue is crucial for ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed in school and life (Omonode, 2023). Students who drop out of school are at a significant disadvantage in terms of future employment opportunities and earning potential (Barford, Coutts and Sahai, 2021). By addressing the factors that lead to dropout rates, such as academic challenges, socio-economic factors, and lack of resources, So that no kid is excluded from school and does not succeed academically, we can find ways to accommodate all children. Furthermore, addressing the dropout issue is important for promoting social mobility and reducing inequality in society (Sennuga et al., 2023). Research has consistently shown that individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to have higher incomes, better health outcomes, and greater economic stability. By addressing dropout rates and ensuring that all students have access to quality education, we can help level the playing field and create a more fair and equitable society for all (Bamidele et al., 2024).

Additionally, addressing the dropout issue is important for promoting economic growth and competitiveness in today's global economy (Omenukor, 2020). In today's rapidly changing and technology-driven world, a high school diploma

is no longer sufficient for securing stable and well-paying employment. By addressing dropout rates and ensuring that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the 21st-century workforce, we can help create a more competitive and innovative economy (Akinyoade and Economics, 2019). Moreover, addressing the dropout issue is crucial for reducing social and economic costs associated with dropouts. Individuals who drop out of school are more likely to experience poverty, homelessness, and involvement in the criminal justice system (Smiley et al., 2021). By addressing dropout rates and ensuring that all students graduate from high school, we can help reduce the burden on social services, healthcare, and the criminal justice system, ultimately saving taxpayers money and improving the overall well-being of society. Furthermore, addressing the dropout issue is essential for promoting social cohesion and community engagement (Oparaduru, 2024). Individuals who drop out of school are more likely to feel disconnected from their communities and less likely to participate in civic and community activities. By addressing dropout rates and ensuring that all students graduate from high school, we can help foster a sense of belonging and community among individuals, ultimately creating a more inclusive and cohesive society.

Moreover, addressing the dropout issue is crucial for promoting mental health and well-being among students. Dropping out of school can have negative effects on individuals' mental health, leading to feelings of low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety (Lawrence and Adebowale, 2023). By addressing the factors that contribute to dropout rates, such as bullying, lack of support, and academic challenges, It is within our power to guarantee that every student has access to the tools and assistance they need to remain enrolled and thrive academically. In addition, addressing the dropout issue is important for promoting innovation and creativity in society. Individuals who drop out of school are less likely to pursue higher education or engage in creative endeavours, ultimately stifling innovation and progress in society (Ibeji, 2023). By addressing dropout rates and ensuring that all students have access to quality education, we can help cultivate a diverse and talented workforce that is equipped to tackle the challenges of the future. Furthermore, addressing the dropout issue is essential for promoting diversity and inclusion in education. Individuals from marginalized and underrepresented communities are disproportionately affected by dropout rates, due to factors such as poverty, discrimination, and lack of resources (Baker, 2023).

➢ *Socioeconomic Factors Contributing to Dropout Rates*

Dropout rates in schools have been a longstanding issue that continues to plague the education system. While various factors contribute to students dropping out of school, socioeconomic factors play a significant role in determining the likelihood of a student leaving school before completing their education (Inah and Uzoigwe, 2024). Socioeconomic factors encompass a range of elements including income, family background, access to resources, and opportunities that can greatly impact a student's educational trajectory.

One key socioeconomic factor that contributes to dropout rates is poverty (Inah and Uzoigwe, 2024). Students from low-income families often face financial barriers that can impede their ability to stay in school. These students may need to work part-time jobs to help support their families, which can take away time and energy from their academics. Additionally, students from low-income families may lack access to resources such as tutoring, academic enrichment programs, or even basic school supplies, all of which can negatively impact their academic performance and motivation to stay in school (Dirie, 2024). Family background is another crucial socioeconomic factor that plays a role in dropout rates. Students who come from families with a history of low educational attainment are more likely to drop out of school themselves. This could be due to a lack of academic support and guidance at home, as well as a lack of understanding of the importance of education. Additionally, students from unstable or dysfunctional family environments may face additional challenges that make it difficult for them to focus on their education and stay in school.

Access to quality education and resources also plays a significant role in dropout rates. Students who attend underfunded schools or schools with high teacher turnover rates may not receive the support and attention they need to succeed academically (Anazia, 2021). Additionally, students who do not have access to extracurricular activities, advanced placement courses, or other opportunities for academic and personal growth may become disengaged from school and ultimately decide to drop out. Furthermore, the socioeconomic status of a student's community can also impact dropout rates. Students who live in high-poverty neighbourhoods may be exposed to a variety of social and environmental stressors that can negatively affect their educational outcomes (Obiagu, 2020). These students may face higher rates of violence, crime, drug use, and other challenges that can make it difficult for them to focus on their education. Additionally, students in high-poverty communities may attend schools that lack resources and support, further exacerbating their risk of dropping out.

The intersectionality of socioeconomic factors must also be considered when examining dropout rates. For example, students who are members of marginalized or underrepresented groups may face additional barriers to staying in school. This could include discrimination, lack of cultural competency in the curriculum, or a lack of access to resources and support that are tailored to their specific needs. These students may be more likely to experience feelings of isolation, alienation, and disconnection from the school environment, ultimately leading to a higher risk of dropping out. Another key aspect to consider when examining socioeconomic factors contributing to dropout rates is the role of mental health. Students from low-income families or disadvantaged backgrounds may be more likely to experience mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, or trauma, which can impact their ability to focus on their education and stay in school. Without access to mental health resources and support, these students may struggle to cope with their challenges and may ultimately decide to drop out (Ayoko, 2022).

Additionally, the lack of support and guidance from adults in a student's life can also contribute to dropout rates (Oparaduru, 2024). Students who do not have positive role models, mentors, or advocates to support them may feel isolated and unsupported in their educational journey. Without access to adults who can provide guidance, encouragement, and resources, students may struggle to navigate the challenges of the educational system and may ultimately choose to leave school (Magaji, 2021). Moreover, the impact of systemic inequalities and inequities cannot be overlooked when examining socioeconomic factors contributing to dropout rates. Students from marginalized or disadvantaged backgrounds may face systemic barriers that make it difficult for them to succeed in school (Nwoke, Oyiga and Cochrane, 2024). This could include discriminatory policies, practices, or attitudes that perpetuate inequalities in the educational system and create barriers to access and success for certain groups of students.

➢ *Cultural and Gender Norms Impacting Girls' Education*

Education is essential for the empowerment and development of individuals and societies (Ojobanikan and Potokri, 2022). However, cultural and gender norms can significantly impact girls' access to and success in education (Edungbola and Ene, 2021). These norms shape societal expectations and beliefs about the roles and capabilities of girls and women, influencing their educational opportunities and outcomes. In this essay, we will explore how cultural and gender norms can affect girls' education and discuss potential strategies to address these challenges.

One of the primary ways in which cultural norms impact girls' education is through traditional gender roles and expectations (Eboyem, 2024). In many societies, girls are often expected to prioritize domestic duties and caregiving responsibilities over pursuing education (Erikitola and Atoba, 2023). This can result in girls being pulled out of school at a young age to help with household chores or care for siblings, limiting their educational opportunities and potential for future success. Moreover, cultural norms around femininity and masculinity can also influence girls' educational experiences. In some cultures, there is a belief that girls are less capable or deserving of education than boys, leading to disparities in access to quality schooling and resources (Ozowuba, 2021). This can create a self-fulfilling prophecy where girls internalize these beliefs and underperform academically due to a lack of confidence and support.

Additionally, cultural norms around marriage and child-rearing can also impact girls' education. In many societies, girls are expected to marry at a young age and start a family, which can disrupt their educational trajectory and limit their opportunities for further learning and career advancement. Early marriage and pregnancy can also increase the likelihood of girls dropping out of school, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and limited opportunities for future generations (Moses, 2019). Religious and cultural beliefs can also play a role in shaping attitudes towards girls' education (Ozowuba, 2021). In some communities, there is a perception that girls should not receive the same level of education as boys based on interpretations of religious texts or cultural traditions. This can

result in girls being denied access to education or being subjected to discriminatory practices within educational institutions, such as limited curriculum options or lack of support for girls' academic achievements.

Furthermore, societal expectations around gender roles and responsibilities can impact girls' educational experiences in subtle ways (Erikitola, and Atoba, 2023). For example, girls may be discouraged from pursuing STEM fields or leadership positions in school due to prevailing notions of gendered interests and abilities. This can limit their career opportunities and perpetuate gender stereotypes that discourage girls from reaching their full potential in their academic and professional pursuits. Despite these challenges, some strategies can be implemented to address the cultural and gender norms that impact girls' education. One approach is to promote gender-sensitive policies and programs that address the unique needs and barriers faced by girls in accessing quality education (Ibeji, 2023). This includes initiatives to increase girls' enrollment and retention in school, provide targeted support for girls at risk of dropping out, and promote gender equality in educational settings.

Another key strategy is to engage with communities and families to challenge harmful cultural norms and attitudes towards girls' education (Eboyem, 2024). This can be done through community outreach programs, awareness campaigns, and advocacy efforts that seek to change perceptions about the value of girls' education and the benefits of gender equality in society. By working collaboratively with stakeholders at all levels, it is possible to create a more supportive and inclusive environment for girls to thrive academically and pursue their educational goals (Emordi and Ruth, 2023).

➤ *Access to Quality Education and Learning Environment*
Access to quality education and a conducive learning environment are critical factors in determining the success and well-being of individuals, communities, and societies as a whole (Nwogu, Diete-Spiff and Ebereonwu, 2024). In today's rapidly changing world where knowledge and skills are the driving forces behind progress and innovation, all individuals must have equal opportunities to access quality education and a supportive learning environment.

Quality education goes beyond just acquiring knowledge; it encompasses the development of critical thinking skills, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and a lifelong love for learning (Edeji, 2020). A quality education should equip individuals with the tools they need to succeed in their chosen fields, adapt to new challenges, and contribute meaningfully to society. This is only achievable when all individuals have access to educational resources, qualified teachers, and modern learning facilities. Unfortunately, access to quality education remains a challenge for many individuals around the world, particularly those from marginalized and disadvantaged communities. Socioeconomic factors, geographical location, gender, disability, and other barriers often limit individuals' access to quality education (Zickafoose et al., 2024). This perpetuates inequality and hinders social mobility, further widening the gap between the privileged and the marginalized.

In addition to access to quality education, the learning environment plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' learning experiences and outcomes (Bamidele et al., 2024). A conducive learning environment is safe, inclusive, supportive, and engaging. It should foster collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity while promoting a culture of respect, diversity, and lifelong learning. Research has shown that the physical environment of a school, such as classrooms, libraries, and recreational spaces, can have a significant impact on students' academic performance and well-being (Nkechi and Niebari, 2020). A well-maintained and properly equipped learning environment can enhance students' motivation, concentration, and overall learning experience. On the other hand, a poorly maintained or unsafe learning environment can hinder students' ability to learn and thrive (Adekunle, Baruwa and Aluko, 2022.).

Furthermore, the social and emotional environment of a school, including the relationships between students and teachers, school culture, and support services, also play a critical role in shaping students' learning experiences (Souley and Abubakar, 2024). Positive relationships with teachers and peers, a sense of belonging, and access to mental health and well-being support services are essential components of a conducive learning environment. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of creating inclusive and equitable learning environments that cater to the diverse needs and abilities of all students. This includes providing support for students with disabilities, English language learners, and other vulnerable populations to ensure that they have equal access to educational opportunities (Omolade and Audu, 2021).

Technology also plays a critical role in shaping the learning environment and expanding access to quality education (Bamidele et al., 2024). Digital tools and resources can enhance students' learning experiences, facilitate personalized learning, and provide access to a wealth of information and educational content. However, it is essential to ensure that technology is used responsibly and effectively to avoid exacerbating existing inequalities (Sennuga et al., 2023).

➤ *Role of Parents and Community Support in Girls' Education*
The role of parents and community support in girls' education is paramount in ensuring that young girls have access to quality education and can reach their full potential (Abubakar, 2023). Research has shown that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, students are more likely to succeed academically and have higher levels of self-esteem. In the case of girls, this parental involvement and support is even more critical due to the social and cultural barriers that often inhibit girls' access to education (Erikitola and Atoba, 2023).

Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's educational outcomes through their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours towards education (Oyinloye, 2021). Studies have shown that when parents prioritize education and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning, their children are more

likely to do well in school. This is particularly true for girls, who often face additional challenges such as gender stereotypes and discrimination that may discourage them from pursuing education. In many communities, especially in developing countries, girls' education is not always seen as a priority. Parents may prioritize the education of their sons over their daughters, leading to disparities in educational attainment and opportunities for girls. Community support, therefore, is essential in changing these attitudes and ensuring that girls have equal access to education (Ahmed and Yola, 2021).

Community support can take various forms, including advocacy for girls' education, providing resources such as scholarships and school supplies, and promoting gender equality in schools and society (Okeke and Nweke, 2023). When communities come together to support girls' education, it sends a powerful message that education is a fundamental right for all children, regardless of their gender. One of the key benefits of parental and community support in girls' education is that it helps to create a conducive learning environment where girls feel valued and supported. When girls see that their parents and communities believe in their potential and are invested in their education, they are more likely to take their studies seriously and strive for academic success (Abubakar, 2023).

Furthermore, parents and communities can also play a role in empowering girls to challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes that may limit their educational opportunities (Erikitola and Atoba, 2023). By encouraging girls to pursue their passions and interests, regardless of societal expectations, parents and communities can help girls break free from the constraints of gender norms and achieve their full potential. Research has shown that when girls receive support from their parents and communities, they are more likely to stay in school, perform better academically (Ayoko, 2022), and ultimately have greater opportunities for future success. This support can come in the form of financial assistance, emotional encouragement, and guidance on educational and career choices.

Moreover, parental and community involvement in girls' education can also help to address some of the underlying causes of gender inequality in education (Ojobanikan and Potokri, 2022). By promoting awareness of the importance of girls' education and advocating for policy changes that prioritize gender equality in schools, parents and communities can help to create a more inclusive and equitable educational system for all children (Ojobanikan and Potokri, 2022).

➢ *Government Policies and Interventions to Prevent Dropout*

Education plays a crucial role in the development of individuals and societies. It is a fundamental human right and a key driver of economic growth and social mobility (Nwuche and Enyia, 2024). However, dropout rates in schools continue to be a significant challenge in many countries around the world. Dropping out of school can have long-term negative consequences for individuals, including lower earning potential, reduced job opportunities, and a higher likelihood of involvement in criminal activities. To address this issue,

governments have implemented various policies and interventions aimed at preventing dropout and ensuring that all students have access to quality education.

One of the key government policies to prevent dropouts is the implementation of compulsory education laws (Magaji, 2021). These laws require children to attend school up to a certain age, typically until they reach the legal age of adulthood. By mandating attendance, governments aim to ensure that all children have access to education and are not deprived of this fundamental right. Compulsory education laws help to reduce dropout rates by creating a legal obligation for parents to send their children to school, thereby increasing school enrollment and attendance. In addition to compulsory education laws, governments also implement policies to address the root causes of dropout, such as poverty, lack of access to quality education, and family issues (Omolade and Audu, 2021). For example, some countries provide financial assistance to low-income families to help cover the costs of school supplies, uniforms, and transportation. By addressing the economic barriers to education, governments can help prevent dropout and ensure that all children have the opportunity to succeed in school.

Another important government intervention to prevent dropout is the implementation of early intervention programs (Bamidele et al., 2024). These programs target at-risk students who may be struggling academically, socially, or emotionally. By identifying and addressing the needs of these students early on, schools can help prevent dropouts and provide the necessary support to ensure their success. Early intervention programs may include tutoring, counselling, mentorship, and academic enrichment activities. Furthermore, governments can also implement policies to improve school conditions and create a positive learning environment for students. This may include reducing class sizes, providing adequate resources and facilities, and fostering a supportive school culture. By creating a safe and engaging learning environment, schools can help prevent dropouts and motivate students to stay in school and succeed academically (Ali, 2024).

Moreover, governments can collaborate with community organizations, non-profit groups, and other stakeholders to implement dropout prevention programs. These programs may include after-school programs, mentorship initiatives, career counselling, and job placement services (Ochor, 2024). By partnering with external organizations, governments can leverage resources and expertise to provide comprehensive support to at-risk students and address the diverse needs of the school community. Additionally, governments can use data and evidence-based research to inform their dropout prevention strategies. By analyzing dropout rates, identifying risk factors, and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions, policymakers can make informed decisions and allocate resources more efficiently (Nwoke, Oyiga and Cochrane, 2024). Data-driven decision-making can help governments target their interventions to specific populations and areas with the highest dropout rates, thereby maximizing the impact of their efforts.

Moreover, governments can also implement policies to improve teacher training and professional development. By providing teachers with the skills and resources they need to support at-risk students, schools can help prevent dropouts and create a more inclusive learning environment (Oparaduru, 2024). Teacher training programs may include workshops, seminars, and ongoing support to help educators better understand the needs of their students and implement effective strategies to promote retention and success. Furthermore, governments can work to engage parents and communities in the education process. By involving parents in their children's education, schools can create a supportive network of stakeholders who are invested in the success of students. Parent engagement programs may include workshops, family events, and communication strategies to promote collaboration between schools, parents, and the community (Eden, Chisom and Adeniyi, 2024).

➤ *Addressing Health and Wellbeing Challenges*

Health and well-being challenges are complex issues that affect individuals, communities, and societies worldwide. These challenges encompass a wide range of issues, including access to healthcare, mental health, substance abuse, and chronic diseases. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that incorporates both individual and systemic interventions to promote health and well-being for all individuals (Nwoke, Oyiga and Cochrane, 2024).

One of the key challenges in addressing health and well-being issues is the lack of access to affordable and quality healthcare services (Abubakar et al., 2022). Many individuals, especially marginalized communities, struggle to access healthcare services due to financial barriers, lack of health insurance, or lack of healthcare providers in their communities. This lack of access to healthcare can result in delayed diagnosis and treatment of health conditions, leading to poorer health outcomes. In addition to access to healthcare services, mental health is another critical aspect of overall health and well-being. Mental health challenges, such as depression, anxiety, and trauma, can have a significant impact on an individual's overall well-being and quality of life. It is essential to destigmatize mental health issues and increase access to mental health services to ensure that individuals receive appropriate care and support (Adegbite, 2024).

Substance abuse is another significant health and well-being challenge that affects individuals of all ages (Sarkingobir, Waheed and Gilani, 2023). Substance abuse can lead to a range of health issues, such as addiction, mental health problems, and physical health problems. Addressing substance abuse requires a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, early intervention, and treatment services to help individuals overcome their addiction and lead healthier lives (Ojonuba et al., 2023). Chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer, are also major health challenges that affect individuals worldwide. These diseases require long-term management and treatment to prevent complications and improve quality of life. Prevention efforts, such as promoting healthy lifestyle behaviours and regular screenings, are crucial in addressing chronic diseases and

reducing the burden on healthcare systems (Ozoemena et al., 2019).

In addition to individual-level interventions, addressing health and well-being challenges also requires systemic changes to healthcare systems and policies. Efforts to improve healthcare access and quality, increase mental health services, and address substance abuse require collaboration among stakeholders, including healthcare providers, policymakers, and community organizations. It is essential to invest in healthcare infrastructure, workforce development, and research to address health disparities and improve health outcomes for all individuals (Abubakar et al., 2022). Furthermore, addressing health and well-being challenges also requires a focus on social determinants of health, such as education, income, and housing (Lawrence and Adebowale, 2023). These social factors play a significant role in shaping health outcomes and access to healthcare services. By addressing social determinants of health, we can promote health equity and reduce disparities in health outcomes among different populations.

Community-based interventions, such as outreach programs, health education, and preventive services, are essential in addressing health and well-being challenges at the grassroots level. These interventions can help raise awareness about health issues, promote healthy behaviours, and provide support to individuals in need. Collaborating with community organizations and stakeholders can help tailor interventions to meet the specific needs of different populations and promote sustainable change (Ebeh, 2024).

IV. METHODOLOGY

In all, 250 papers were taken into account for this evaluation, with the aid of expert recommendations and thorough searches of pertinent journals and academic websites. Each of the included studies was assessed for its quality and usefulness. Although many of the studies were just broad surveys that didn't go further into the themes, the research did discover at least 10 papers addressing each issue. There is little evidence from studies to suggest that enhancing the physical school environment impacts learning results. Most evaluations mainly look at how something affects enrollment, attendance, and dropout rates.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers concluded that not sending girls to school is a culturally acceptable objective. This result is consistent with what Lukman (2021) has shown. Furthermore, there is still a long way to go before Nigeria's educational system achieves gender equality, despite previous attempts. Examining the cultural norms about females in Nigeria was the primary goal of the research. Culture has a stronger impact on Nigerian females, according to the study's results. The fact that most people think females are treated worse than men just because they are female is evidence of this. Everyone seems to agree that females learn more at home than at school, even if most of them are seeking changes for the girls. This seems to imply that

they are subtly implying that the girls should learn how to conduct housework at home instead of attending school.

This attitude lends credence to the findings that Eboyem (2024) presented in his study, which said that many people, either directly or indirectly, saw girls as property rather than as individuals. Initially, she is the property of her father, who is eager to find a buyer for her and sell her to her husband. It is not for her benefit that she spends her life. This means that she is supposed to be raised at home and does not need an ambition or formal education. This is because, as Eboyem (2024) astutely pointed out, a woman's proper place is not in the classroom but in the home with her husband. Therefore, her only purpose in life is to provide for her family by cooking, serving her husband sex, giving birth, and cleaning up after the kids and the house. From this, one can infer that educating girls is not seen as crucial in Nigerian society.

First and first, we need to relearn the roles that women are expected to play to achieve gender equality, decreased inequality, and complete elimination of poverty, as was revealed. Being receptive to the concept of gender equality is crucial if we want to believe that men and women are fundamentally equal and deserving of equal treatment. We can't hope to reduce various forms of inequality in any other way than this. Ozowuba (2021) echoes this sentiment, stating that many parents are reluctant to put money into their daughters' education on the assumption that they would be nothing more than a marital possession after them. However, there is a temporal restriction on the female child's ability to bear the family name, but the boy child's legacy will last until his death. This leads them to the conclusion that the schooling requirements of the male kid are higher than those of the female child. A woman is only able to provide adequate care for her family if she is educated, financially self-sufficient, and health aware. This is because many cultures do not believe that a woman should be the main carer for her family. Training our young women and children is the answer to the problem of poverty in Nigeria, which we want to eradicate.

The outcomes of the research revealed many socio-cultural aspects that have an impact on how females in Nigeria get their education. Because the female's primary work is in the kitchen, many of the respondents believed that she is not receiving an education. The research identified additional factors such as the inequitable treatment of girls during and after school, religious obligations, early marriage, and the significant workload imposed on girls, which detracts from their focus even when they are attending school. These exemplify socio-cultural elements that adversely affect females' education. Adeyanju, Bamigbade, and Ajayi (2020) articulate their dissatisfaction with worldwide gender equality in education, stating, "Gender inequality in education is extreme." This lends credence to Ibrahim's assertion. She underscored that culture is the primary factor contributing to the regression of gender parity and equality, especially in education.

The majority of respondents agreed with Eboyem's (2024) assessment that despite the Nigerian government's numerous education programs aimed at ensuring girls' education, there are still significant instances where girls are not allowed to take part in assessments related to their education. This cultural norm is particularly prevalent in Northern Nigeria, where just 4% of girls reach secondary school and 62% of girls cannot read or write. The need for Northern Nigeria to minimise inequities, particularly concerning education, is greater than it has ever been since the beginning of time. Additionally, many traditional customs in Nigeria, particularly in the North, prohibit young girls from getting an adequate education, as Omoniyi (2020) found in his study. Some instances of such practices include female genital mutilation (FGM), polygamy, early marriage, and delivery at a young age.

All the indicators tell the female youngster to think, act, and be less than the male child; why is this? It shows that society shapes children's identities via education. The claims made by the hypothesis that served as a basis are thus confirmed. Just because she's a woman! As far as children are concerned, there is no biological difference. Society does; girls' potential will be limited until our society is restructured, and we will never reach our goal of "no poverty" if this happens. To reduce educational disparities, this is a call to arms for the government to restructure cultural traditions to implement laws that do just that.

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not the culture of Nigeria has a beneficial or detrimental impact on the education of young women. Based on the results of the survey, it has been observed that a significant number of individuals are dissatisfied with the current status of girls' education; thus, they consider culture to be a factor that has a negative impact on the education of girls. As a result of the cultural attitudes that are held about girls, many people have stated that females have become disabled and unproductive. There is a clear disparity in wealth between the northern states, which have a smaller proportion of female pupils enrolled in schools, and the rest of the nation, and this is the main reason why poverty is so pervasive nationwide. Many people who took the survey had the opinion that "culture has taken away the best part of our females." Many individuals can attest to the fact that a large number of Nigerian women, particularly those residing in the northern region, do not actively pursue their happiness. To fulfil the many responsibilities that have been imposed upon them, they lead their lives for the benefit of their immediate family, which consists of their wives and children.

The research dug further into the many ways the government is involved in each of these. The majority of people who took the survey agreed that the government has done what it needed to do to end poverty and ensure that all citizens had access to high-quality education. This includes initiatives like expanding access to higher education, creating intervention programs to help low-income families, and financially subsidising some students' tuition. Meanwhile, cultural factors still have a major influence in shaping many decisions. Religion influences educational policy, according to Sarumi, Faluyi, and Okeke-Uzodike's (2019) research. Religious beliefs impact educational practices in subtle ways, such as the inherent superiority of men over females and the expectation that girls should be subordinate to boys regardless of their age. Even in the classroom, it affects how boys and girls behave

relative to one another. This aligns with the discussions that Sarumi, Faluyi, and Okeke-Uzodike had. Girls' pessimism about schooling stems from all of these societal mores. Being educated is unimportant to them; what matters is getting married and starting a family.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The research examined the influence of culture on the education of young women in Nigeria, with a particular emphasis on Kaduna state. To learn more about girls' perspectives on Nigerian culture, the factors that shape their education, and the total impact of Nigerian culture on girls' education, three research questions were posed. Introduction, literature review, methodology, field study, and analysis were the five parts that made up the research. This study's results showed that cultural factors are significant in explaining the gender gap in educational attainment. Girls face obstacles to formal education due to cultural perceptions, beliefs, and behaviours. Thus, alleviating poverty and promoting gender equality and excellent education were the overarching goals of the study in Nigeria.

The findings of this research indicate that cultural and social factors greatly influence the level of female participation in educational pursuits. Cultural norms forbid her from even trying to keep up with her male classmates in the classroom for several reasons, including the widespread belief that women are less valuable as human beings and more appropriately raised at home to care for their husbands, and traditional values that dictate how women should behave. Because of her family's cultural practices, she is not allowed to go to school. These practices include a wide range of issues, such as marriage at a young age, having children at a young age, FGM, male favouritism within the family, and community initiation into adulthood at a young age. She would be better off keeping to herself and being submissive. Cultural practices like these do not pave the way for gender equality or for girls to get an adequate education; rather, they limit girls' potential, make them perform at a low level, and eventually make them worthless to society.

It was found that the most significant consequence of the issue is the continuation of poverty, given that the majority of the population in Nigeria is comprised of women. If women are persistently denied access to education that would enable them to remain economically productive and socially acceptable, the nation's economy will continue to deteriorate. Results showed that educating women, who make up the bulk of the population, was the key to the country's goal of eradicating poverty.

Ignorance has been responsible for the deaths of a great number of innocent people while mothers pass away while they are carrying their children, so do their offspring; some children pass away while they are babies, while others pass away much later in life. Birth control, vaccination, and excellent child care could only be passed down from educated mothers, thus if more women had gotten degrees, maybe none of this would have happened. Following the findings of the research, it was found that women would do even better in the home responsibilities that are assigned to them if they are educated; if they are

provided with great education, they will cheer the country to no longer be in poverty.

The issue will be solved by making more concerted efforts to guarantee that a greater number of females take part in educational opportunities. Although the government has taken measures to enhance educational accessibility, enacted legislation to foster gender equality in education, and informed the public, further actions are necessary to secure community support for the government's initiatives aimed at delivering quality education to girls.

This study indicates that the government has undertaken a deliberate effort to eradicate gender disparity in the nation, especially in education. The UPE, UBE, and AGILE schemes, which are being implemented in Kaduna, are just some of the initiatives that have been taken to educate more young women. Cultural values, on the other hand, continue to be prevalent in the community. An example that is representative of what is occurring all around the globe is presented in this case study. Patriarchy is prevalent in many cultures, notably in Africa; as a result, it has an impact on the education of young females, which in turn violates their rights.

Furthermore, the findings of this research have shown that the level of education in a nation is indirectly proportional to the economic standing of that country. This indicates that the level of a country's production increases in proportion to the degree of education that it has, which in turn improves the country's economic standing. Consequently, the government should give a better education level if it wants to alleviate poverty. It is highly recommended that the government undertake more coordinated measures to ensure that all citizens, especially youngsters, are provided with educational possibilities. The government can take more measures to ensure that all households and communities would support girls' access to school. If cultural norms are at the root of the problem, then the government must intervene to address the problem head-on, taking action against both the cultural keepers and those who disregard them.

As a result, the government can bring the religious and cultural leaders up to speed. Facilitating seminars can effectively educate them on persuading their members to enrol their daughters in school. If the government can effectively communicate the benefits of girls' education to those in positions of authority, then this will be successful. Good things are very important to Nigerians. If they are correctly persuaded to recognise that a reduction in disparities and the provision of excellent education would lead to the elimination of poverty, they will be willing to accept the concept, allow their daughters to attend school, and ensure that they graduate with a good standing.

There is also the possibility that the government may improve its performance by enacting particular laws to safeguard the educational rights of adolescents. The infringement of children's rights needs to be regarded as a severe crime that is subject to legal repercussions. This is because Nigerians have unknowingly developed a culture that values punishment more than the law. As a result, if there is no

harsh penalty linked to a crime, they would freely indulge in it, just as they will violate the rights of children. A great number of Nigerians openly violate the rights of children since they are aware that they will not be punished for their actions. Yet, people will support strict government efforts to preserve children's rights, especially those related to education, starting at the home level and working their way down to the schools.

Furthermore, the government can explicitly provide incentives to parents who put their daughters through higher education. For this reason, they will use the incentive system to address the issue further. Survivability takes precedence above cultural values for many Nigerians. Assuming the government were to provide a fixed amount of funding or a gift to each family that enrols their girls in school and supports them until they finish basic schooling, then a great number of parents would be compelled to enrol their children to take advantage of the available benefits. Although this may seem to be an expensive endeavour for the government, it is an investment that will prove to be profitable for both parties and the nation at large.

Government can impose additional obligations on schools, notably in Northern Nigeria, to address the needs of female' children and provide them with an equal chance to study and develop. Nobody should be treated unfairly or criticised in any way. As an alternative to the many socially acceptable choices, females should be encouraged to register in school. Not only should the government be responsible for enacting laws, but it should also regulate schools to ensure that they adhere to the rules that have been placed on them and that they provide an education that is of the highest possible standard.

Last but not least, the curriculum of schools needs to include instruction on skills. Despite the fact that this has been going on for a number of years in Nigeria, it still needs to be enforced and organised. To ensure that both girls and boys get the same level of instruction, every school need to provide skill acquisition classes. After that, the training may be tailored to the specific needs of each gender, such as teaching ladies how to cook or manage the household, while teaching the boys how to do carpentry, etc. This will give the girl and her family the impression that she is learning to be a better house manager while still fulfilling the cultural duties that she is expected to play. This is also true; she is learning intellectually, but she is also gaining a skill that will make her economically useful. This is true at the same time. These recommendations will guarantee that there is no poverty, equality between the sexes, great education, and a reduction in inequality.

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