An Assessment of the Mass Media as Tools for Promoting Girl-Child Education in Jos Metropolis

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Abstract

The paper appraises the role of the media in the promotion of girl-child education in Jos metropolis. The survey research method was adopted, using questionnaire as an instrument to elicit information from the respondents. Findings from the analysis of the data gathered show that several factors act as hindrances to girl-child education in Jos metropolis. Such factors among others include: poverty, sexual violence, sexual abuse, culture and religion. Findings further revealed that girl-child education is poor in Jos Metropolitan Local Government Areas. More so, findings show that the media have been used to promote girl- child education in Jos metropolis, but the extent to which they are used is minimal. Based on the above findings, the paper concludes that girl-child education is not given due recognition in Jos Metropolitan Local Government Areas and that the media, which are the agents of social change, have not fared well in creating awareness about girl- child education and that the extent to which girl-child education is embraced in Jos Metropolitan Local Government Areas is poor. It therefore recommends among others that, the government needs to make laws that will prohibit early marriage, which mostly affect the female folk. The society generally should create avenue to empower parents to enable them send their children to school and also empower the children to sue their parents against any infringement on their fundamental human rights, especially the girl-child. And most importantly, the media in Jos metropolitan local government areas should endeavour to pay serious attention to campaigns that will promote girl-child education. The media of mass communication, whether print or electronic, should be massively used to promote girl-child education, not only in Jos metropolis, but in the entire country.

Key Words: Mass Media, Girl Child, Education and Attitudinal Change

Introduction

Education is a human right that should be given to all human beings. There are lots of international human right instruments that provide for education as a fundamental human right, which include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1960), etc. Research has also shown that schooling improves productivity, health and reduces negative features of life, such as child labour. This is why there has been a lot of emphasis, particularly in recent times, for all citizens to have access to basic education. It has however been

established by researchers that improving female education is crucial for national development.

Education is a basic human right and has been recognized as such, since the 1948 adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then, numerous human rights treaties have reaffirmed these rights and have supported entitlement to free compulsory primary education for all children. In 1990 for example, the Education for All (EFA), communication was launched to ensure that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, those in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

According to UNESCO report, about 90 million children are not in school and majority of them are girls. Most girls do not have access to education despite the fact that it is their rights. The girl- child is often saddled with responsibilities, which may make her not to have access to quality education.

It is true that many governments make provision for the education of their citizens, but the provisions, most of the time, do not take into cognizance the peculiarities of the girls. In that case, the girl-child may not have access to education, which is a fundamental human right. Research has shown that millions of girls do not have access to schools despite the concerted efforts to push the cause forward. Okeke, Nzewi and Njoku (2008) identify child labour, poverty and lack of sponsorship, quest for wealth, bereavement, truancy, broken home, engagement of children and house helps, as the clog in the wheel of girl's access to education. The right to education, which is a fundamental human right, is frequently denied to girls in some African countries. The then United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, stated that ''in Africa, when families have to make a choice due to limited resources of either a girl or a boy child, it is always the boy that is chosen to attend school''. In Africa, many girls are prevented from getting the education entitled to them because families often send their daughters out to work at a young age so that they can get the additional income they may need to exist beyond subsistence level and finance the education of sons.

Abdulahi in Maduagwu and Mohammed (2006) notes that the importance of education in the life of an individual cannot be over emphasised. Central to the most basic problems facing the girl-child is her access to qualitative education. This is because without education, the realisation of all other rights socio-economic and political rights becomes impossible. In the typical

Nigerian setting, education of the girl-child has not received serious attention. The general apathy in this regard, especially among unlettered parents has to do with the materialistic concept of education, that is, the belief that the girl-child will eventually marry and leave the family with whatever material benefits derivable from her education to her husband's home. They would rather prefer to invest in the education of the male child who is expected to marry in the family name.

Traditionally, the role of women has been that of home maintenance and rearing of children. Right from childhood, the girl-child is prepared and trained with the ability of cooking, learning and all kinds of chores in the home, all directed towards a better house wife. The gender role type thus, pose a bias against the girls by the society. By and large, the predicament of the Nigerian girl-child is enormous. Thus, in Nigeria, the girl-child is faced with a lot of problems and constraints, which act as serious impediments towards her self-realisation. It is therefore in line with the foregoing that we ascertain the challenges the girl-child faces in terms of education with Jos metropolis as an area of study and how the media can be used to promote the rights of the girl-child, especially as it has to do with quality education.

Statement of the Problem

The issue is about the girl child; she is the dawn, the bedrock and the future of any nation or society aspiring for sustainable development. However, she has continued to be the subject of rejection, marginalisation and deprivation. In Nigeria, the predicaments of the girl child are better imagined; they rear their ugly heads in the area of denial of access to quality education, good health, survival and incidence of child labour, child trafficking, prostitution and ritual sacrifices.

Although, there were varieties of laws regulating the rights of children before the 2003 Child Act, such laws were; The 1999 Constitution, Chapter IV; The Children and Young Persons Law; The Criminal Code Laws in the South and the Penal Code in the North; Adoption of Children Laws in some Southern States and Abuja; Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act 2003, just to mention a few. The lists of such laws cannot be exhausted as some states have also put in place different laws that regulate the rights of children. More so, there are some International Treaties affecting the rights of children. Since 1959, several international documents had sought to achieve the aim of protecting the right of children, such laws were;

League of Nations Declaration of the Right of the Child, 1924; United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959; Declaration of the Rights and Welfare of the African Child, 1979 and The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. One sad thing is that despite all these laws, children, especially the girls, are still deprived from enjoying the full benefit of their basic rights; especially the right to quality education.

Against this backdrop, it becomes pertinent to ask: what is the role of the media in promoting girl-child education in Jos metropolis. Thus, the problem this study seeks to investigate is the impact of the media in promoting girl-child education.

Purpose of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to assess the role of the media in the promotion of girl-child education in Jos metropolis. Specifically however, the study aims at:

a. ascertaining the extent to which girl-child education is embraced in Jos metropolis;

b. finding out the extent to which the girl- child has access to education in Jos metropolis;

c. finding out the factors (if any), which impede the effective education of the girl- child in Jos metropolis; and

d. finding out the extent to which the media are used to promote girl-child education in Jos metropolis.

Research Questions

Based on the problem and the purpose of the study stated above, the following research questions have been drawn to guide the study:

a. What are the factors that hinder the effective education of the girl – child in Jos metropolis?

b. To what extent is girl-child education embraced in Jos metropolis?

c. To what extent does the female child have access to education in Jos metropolis?

d. To what extent are the media used to promote girl- child education in jos metropolis?

What is the Meaning of Education?

Education as a concept has refused to yield itself to a generally acceptable definition. This is because people use education to mean different things at different times. Generally, education is perceived as a continuous process of learning from the birth of an individual till his death. In some cases, people use education as a process, a product, an enterprise and as a discipline. This explains why Adomeh (2004: 268) notes that defining education may not be as easy, as people think. The reason, according to Adomeh is that, everyone who puts forth a definition is viewing the concept from a particular perspective. Thus, the result is that different persons have put many definitions forward. But by and large, education is any attempt made to impart knowledge on another person. It could also mean the transmission of knowledge from one person to another or from the society to its members or from one culture to another. Whether one is conscious of it or not whenever he experiences a novelty or learns a new thing, he is being educated. Thus, whenever men and women interact with one another, they are influencing each other. This is why education is considered a continuous process as long as one lives. Ojih, in Ojiafor and Unachukwu (1996:159) identifies three major forms of education; namely:

a. **Informal Education:** The informal education is carried out in a relaxed environment usually within the home setting. Learners acquire skills through continuous practice, hence it is said that the process of transmitting skills is based on imitation, recitation, practice and trial and error. There is absence of a formal examination procedure unlike the kind that we do have within the school system. Those charged with the business of instruction are usually family members and or close relations.

b. **Formal Education:** Formal education is that kind of education in which the system of instruction is done in a formal environment, specifically designated for it. This system of education involves reading, writing, examination, promotion and withdrawal. In addition, there are teachers specifically hired to carry out the process of instruction. There exists learners who have been recruited based on certain criteria and there exists also a hierarchical system of

instruction in formal schools. Formal education emphasises certification as the end product of the learning process.

c. **Non-formal Education:** The non-formal system of education combines the features of both the formal and informal systems. Examples of these are seminars, conferences, symposia, workshops, to mention a few. Although the process of instruction takes place, but most of the time, those who are in attendance are contemporaries. Ideas are mainly shared and individual experiences enriched. Examinations are not taken at the end of instructions. In some cases, certificate of participation may be awarded. The environment from which this kind of education takes place is usually relaxed.

The Concept of a Child and a Girl-Child

The Child Right's Act 2003, passed into law in the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja), defines a child as a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years. The Webster's Dictionary defines a child as a boy or girl at any age between infancy and adolescence or a new born infant. The Black's Law Dictionary on the other hand, defines a child as a person who has reached the age of 14 years. But in this paper, the term ''refers to a female or a male who is below the age of 18.

The girl child is a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen (18) years of age. It is the age before one becomes young adult. This period covers the crèche, nursery or early childhood (0 – 5years) primary (6 - 12). During this period, the young child is totally under the care of the adult who may be her parents or guardians and older siblings. It is made up of infancy, childhood, early and adolescent stages of development. During this period, the girl child is malleable, builds and develops her personality and character. She is very dependent on the significant others, those on whom she models her behaviour through observation, repetition and imitation. Her physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional developments start and progress to get to the peak at the young adult stage. The girl-child simply refers to the female child that has not reached the age of Adult. Going by these definitions, it implies that a child in the face of the law, is meek and innocent and needs the protection of the parents and the law in order to survive and grow properly into a complete being.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The work is anchored on the development media theory and agenda setting theory. The development media theory, according to Asemah (2011) seeks to explain the normative behaviours of the press in countries that are conventionally classified together as developing countries. According to Sambe, cited in Asemah (2011), the journalistic responsibility is that, information in journalism is understood as a social good and not as a commodity, which means that the journalist shares responsibility for the information transmitted and is thus, accountable not only to those controlling the media, but ultimately to the public at large, including various social interests. The journalist's social responsibility requires that he or she will act under all circumstances in conformity with a personal ethical consciousness. Be it as it may, the Nigerian journalist has maintained a standard of repute to the society, as well as, a standard of dispute.

According to the development media theory, the media are to be used to serve the general good of the nation. These, the media can do by functioning as government instruments for achieving economic, political and cultural development, national sovereignty, etc. The media are seen as agents of development and social change in any community thus, the theory says that the media should be used to complement government's effort by carrying out programmes that will lead to positive behavioural change among the people. Based on this, we can say that the theory is peculiar to developing countries, because they are the ones that need to achieve the goals of development. The theory which is often seen as the combination of libertarian and social responsibility theories is anchored on communication for development, where the media are seen as reliable tools that can be used to champion social, economic, political, educational and cultural development. In simple term, the theory is all about positive usage of the media in national development for the autonomy and cultural identity of the particular national society. The development media theory therefore, holds that the press should set their priorities in news and information packaging to link with other developing countries, which are closed geographically, culturally and politically.

The development media theory is relevant to the study in that it places emphasis on using the media for development purposes. The media can be used to change people's attitudes concerning girl- child education. This

means that they can be used to develop the attitudes of the people so that they will value the education of the girl- child, not only in Jos metropolis, but the entire country.

The agenda setting theory which was proposed by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw in 1972/1973 assumes that the media set agenda for the public to follow. The theory holds that most of the pictures we store in our heads, most of the things we think or worry about, most of the issues we discuss in our society, are based on what we have read, listened to or watched in different mass media. The media make us to think about certain issues, they make us to think or feel that certain issues are more important than others in our society. The agenda setting theory argues that the media may not tell us what to think, but may tell us what to think about.

The foregoing implies that the media ''play drums'' and when they ''play their drums'', we begin to dance to the tune of their music. Folarin (1998) notes that the agenda setting theory implies that the mass media pre-determine what issues are regarded as important at any given time in a given society.

The relevance of the agenda setting theory to the study cannot be over-emphasised. The media generally set agenda for the people to follow. What people think about in the society is based on the information conveyed to them through the media. Thus, there is the need to use the media to set agenda for the people about girl- child education, which will in turn, make people to embrace girl- child education.

Several factors have been identified as responsible for the neglect of girl-child education in Nigeria. Some of the factors as identified by Mohammed in Maduagwu and Mohammed (2006) are:

i. **Economic Factors:** Nigeria as an independent entity is undoubtedly characterised by very harsh economic conditions. This has resulted into scarce resources. As a result of this, choice has to be made between whom to send to school. Most often, it is the girl-child that remains at home. Due to poverty, girls get withdrawn from schools, so as to help to supplement family income through hawking, trading or even working on the farm, so as to support the family. In some cases, the girls are given out as house helps or even sent into early

marriage because of huge bride price. Often, it is such girls that fall victims of VVF as a result of immaturity. Husbands are known to have abandoned such young wives to their faith when this happens. Thus, poverty remains one of the largest barriers to access to education by the girl-child. Paying school fees is impossibility for many families struggling to make ends meet, especially in light of the ongoing food crisis. According to UNESCO, children from poor, indigenous and disabled populations are at a systematic disadvantage as are, those living in slums. Additionally, girls are not likely to have access to education. UNESCO noted that this is due to sexual violence, insecure school environments and inadequate sanitations that adversely affect girls' self esteem, participation and retention. According to World Bank (2003), more than 350 million people, over half Africa's population, live below the poverty line of one dollar a day. This implies that poverty too, excludes children, including the girl-child from school.

ii. **Sexual Violence and Abuse:** This also hampers the girls from going to school. Due to the fear of sexual violence, most parents deny their girl-children access to school.

iii. **Political Factors:** Despite Nigeria's signatory to various international conventions on the right of the children generally, so far, very little has been achieved. The situation remains pathetic and serious. For instance, at the formation of the United Nations, which is almost six (6) decades old, the precarious situation of the children worldwide became so obvious that it became necessary to establish UNICEF with special focus on the needs of the children around the world. It is rather sad to note that for almost six (6) decades after UNICEF, children's problems are far from solved, especially in the LCDs like Nigeria. The situation is best captured in the following observation: ''there is a sense of powerlessness in our children. They are marginalised. There is a lot of apathy on the government. They (children) are afraid, with a lot of uncertainty, confusion etc…. all of these combine to give the child a cloudy and hopeless future'' The import is that the Nigerian government only pays lip service and lacks the political will to implement policies on children.

iv.   **The School Environmental Factors:** Often, most parents are scared of sending their female children to school in distant places and would rather keep them at home. According to Umar (1997), curricular, textbooks and other learning materials are usually gender-biased. She opines that right from childhood, girls are channelled into stereotyped traditional carrier in form of textbooks illustrations and stores, consequently leading to the development of poor self-image at a tender age. Also, sexual harassments during educational pursuit create serious emotional and psychological strain on the girl- child.

v.   **Socio-Cultural and Religious Factors:** In most African societies, especially in Nigeria, the role of the girl as a wife and mother is conceived as the utmost priority not only by her parents, but also by the girl-child herself. However, in the Nigerian context, gender discrepancy in education is sustained by cultural factors. This wrong notion that her place is in the kitchen, to be seen and not to be heard has had very serious implications on the girl-child's ability at self-actualisation. Umar (1997) notes that out of the 130 million children in LCDs without access to education, 81 million are girls. Also, certain cultural and traditional practices like female circumcision, early marriage, etc, are to say the least unprogressive, because they lead not only to absenteeism, distraction, but also to eventual dropout of girls.

More so, the ethics and values of some religions do not help matters, as they are often perceived with tremendous suspicions. It has been reported in BBC News (2009) that African patriarchal societal viewpoint favours boys over girls, because boys maintain the family lineage. That their mothers were not educated is another reason that makes them feel that their daughters do not need education. Furthermore, some families do not believe in the education of girls. Mwangi (2004) notes that a combination of poverty and backward cultural practices continues to deny the girl-child her right to education. He noted that even with the introduction of free primary education, access to education still remains a wide dream to many Kenyan children, especially girls. Mwangi notes thus:

> Despite the introduction of free primary education in the country, which accounted for an increase in enrolment, a

sizeable number of children, especially girls, still find themselves out of school, owing to a number of reasons. These reasons are: demands for their labour in the homes such as assisting in looking after younger siblings, child marriage, doing house chores, death of mother and looking after the sick member of the family. Some girls are given to marriage against their wishes and when they refuse, they are threatened with death; the children are given to marriage at a very tender age in quest of dowry from the husband.

Some parents justify the denial of girls of their rights to education to prevent them from bringing shame to the family through early pregnancy. Yet, others believe that women who are at the same level of education as the men are a disgrace to the community, because more often than not, they will not get married and if they do, it will be to a foreigner. For such parents, early marriage is the best way to prevent this and at the same time, preserve traditions. Cole (1998) notes that some cultures define women as after-thoughts, inferior to men, and good only for domestic work. There is therefore a wide range of cultural factors that influence the low level of women participation in education. It is worthy of note that women begin as girls before they are eventually called women. Hence, some cultural issues influencing the level of involvement of girls in education have been characterised by Cole to include the following:

a. **Socialisation Pattern:** Traditionally, in Nigeria, women are assigned with the role of managing homes while men are considered as the brain or bread winner of the family. However, with the coming of western education, boys were enrolled in schools and girls remained at home to cater for the younger ones and perform domestic works. When women education was eventually considered, it was limited in scope and the subject centered around domestic science, child and mother, craft, home management etc. While boys offer courses that were remarked as unfeminine, but purely scientific. In addition, Nigerian culture does not regard highly educated women as good wives, but gives credit to illiterates and half educated women as good home managers and children bearers. All these lower the involvement on the girl-child in science education.

b. **Marriage:** Early marriage is a depressing phenomenon for women education in science disciplines. Girls who go into marriage early deny themselves of the opportunity of education. Boys are therefore more available for education since they are not affected by early marriage phenomenon. This cultural practice serves as a setback for women in education.

c. **Religion:** Both Christian and Islamic doctrines encourage women to be taught more in areas that make them good mothers and wives. The Purdah system practiced in Islamic religion was the extreme case of shielding women from science education and western civilisation and subjecting them to bondage, in science class, girls were denied the opportunity of gaining knowledge and skills like boys who were favoured traditionally to study science. These affect women's participation in science adversely.

d. **Self as an Impediment:** This focuses on the girl herself as the first major problem. A lot has to be done by the girl to free herself to fulfill her aspirations and impact on the society positively. Women who have made it in education are those who believed in themselves, therefore beating the odds to be where they are. Self-image is the foundation for the development of the individual woman. The other factors that are important in self-actualisation are motivations, ambition, tenacity and determination, awareness and willingness to learn. All these are however contingent on overcoming the problems from within and assuring oneself. Girls do not have to accept the lie that they are a deformed category of humans, but like their male brothers, are richly endowed and can excel at whatever they set their minds to do.

The Media and Girl-Child Education

The media have a very crucial role to play in the promotion of girl child education in any country. The media according to Asemah (2011) are agents of social change that can bring about positive attitudinal change in the audience. They set agenda for the people to follow in any society. The media are crucial to opinion formulation and eventual outcomes of events. The media are champions of human rights. They act as the eyes, ears and voices of the public, drawing attention to abuses of power and human rights, often at considerable personal risk. Through their work, they can encourage

governments and civil society organisations to effect changes that will improve the quality of people's lives. Journalists, photographers and programme-makers frequently expose the plight of children caught up in circumstances beyond their control or abused or exploited by adults. However, it is equally important to consider the children's angle' in more conventional news coverage. A good way of testing the value of changes in the law or fiscal policy, for example, is to consider the extent to which children will benefit or suffer as a consequence. The way in which the media represent or even ignore children can influence decisions taken on their behalf and how the rest of society regards them. The media often depict children merely as silent 'victims' or charming 'innocents'. By providing children and young people with opportunities to speak for themselves - about their hopes and fears, their achievements and the impact of adult behaviour on their lives, media professionals can remind the public that children deserve to be respected as individual human beings. Media professionals have an obligation to respect children's human rights, in how they operate and how they represent them.

International Federation of Journalists (2005) notes that all journalists and media professionals have a duty to maintain the highest ethical and professional standards and should promote within the industry the widest possible dissemination of information about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its implications for the exercise of independent journalism. Media organisations should regard violation of the rights of children and issues related to children's safety, privacy, security, their education, health and social welfare and all forms of exploitation as important questions for investigation and public debate. Children have an absolute right to education, the only exceptions being those explicitly set out in these guidelines. Journalistic activity, which touches on the lives and welfare of children, should always be carried out with appreciation of the vulnerable situation of children. Journalists and media organisations shall strive to maintain the highest standards of ethical conducts in reporting children's affairs and in particular, they shall:

- strive for standard of excellence in terms of accuracy and sensitivity when reporting on issues involving children;

- avoid programming and publication of images, which intrude upon the media space of children with information, which is damaging to them;

- avoid the use of stereotypes and sensational presentation to promote journalistic material involving children;

- consider carefully the consequences of publication of any material concerning children and shall minimise harm to children;

- guard against visually or otherwise identifying children unless, it is demonstrably in the public interest;

- give children, where possible, the right of access to media to express their own opinions without inducement of any kind;

- ensure independent verification of information provided by children and take special care to ensure that verification takes place without putting child informants at risk;

- avoid the use of sexualised images of children;

- use fair, open and straightforward methods for obtaining pictures and where possible, obtain them with the knowledge and consent of children or a responsible adult, guardian or carer;

- verify the credentials of any organisation purporting to speak for or to represent the interests of children;

- not make payment to children for material involving the welfare of children or to parents or guardians of children, unless it is demonstrably in the interest of the child.

Media should not consider and report the conditions of children only as events, but should continuously report the process likely to lead or leading to the occurrence of these events. The media, therefore, have a crucial role to play to:

- raise awareness of children's rights and responsibilities;

- ensure children's rights are promoted and protected;

- report on failures and neglect;

- highlight successes;

- hold government and society accountable to the commitments made and goals set to promote and protect children's rights.

Furthermore, by providing children with opportunities to speak for themselves about their hopes and fears, their achievements and the impact of adult behaviour and decisions on their lives, media professionals can improve the representation of children's issues. The challenge is to cover these issues within the context of journalist independence and in a manner which respects the ethical issues involved. All journalists and media professionals have a duty to maintain the highest ethical and professional standards and should promote within the industry, the widest possible dissemination of information about the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and its implications for the exercise of independent journalism.

Research Design

This study adopted the survey method to gather data. The survey research has the right attributes that will allow for guided, systematic and objective collection of the needed data and statistics; hence, the choice of the survey research method.

Sample Selection Procedure

The non-probability sampling and the probability sampling techniques were used. Accordingly, we purposively choose to study only the four local government areas that make up Jos metropolis. A purposive sampling was used in selecting the local government areas for the study. These include: Jos North, Jos East, Jos South and Bassa local government areas. Three towns were selected from Jos North local government area- Jos, Naraguta and Tudunwada. Four towns were selected from Jos South local government area – Bukuru, Dadin kowa, Hwolshe and Anglo Jos. Two towns were selected from Bassa local government area – Rukuba and Miango, while Angware was selected from Jos East local government area. Through this technique, 10 towns were selected from the four local government areas that make up Jos metropolis.

The decision to purposively sample the towns was based on the fact that they are the towns where you have broadcast and print media where you could easily find media practitioners who would be able to respond to the questions

appropriately. This is in agreement with Wimmer and Dominick (2008) who observed that a purposive sampling includes subjects selected on the basis of specific characteristics or qualities and eliminates those which fail to meet these criteria.

The simple random sampling technique was used to select 4 streets from each of the selected towns in the local government areas. To arrive at the four (4) streets in each town in the local government area, the researcher wrote the names of the streets on pieces of papers, dropped them in a can and shuffled them. A research assistant was then asked to close his eyes and pick at random. Following this procedure, four (4) streets, including the ones that house media institutions where selected from each town and this brought about the selection of 40 streets from the towns in the local government areas.

Having selected the streets, the researcher selected compounds from the selected streets. Accordingly, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique. First, media institutions found in the sampled streets were purposively sampled. Additionally, 4 compounds belonging to the following categories of persons were selected: print media, electronic media, higher institutions and primary/ secondary schools. Accordingly, 2 respondents each were selected from the institutions on each street. Following this procedure, 10 respondents were selected from each street. 40 respondents in each town and 400 respondents in the 4 local government areas sampled for the study.

Research Instrument

The researcher used the questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. A total of 25-item questionnaire was administered to the four hundred (400) respondents in Jos metropolis to obtain data on the media and girl-child education. The questionnaire was in two sections. Section one had five questions classified as bio-data information. Section two of the research questionnaire had 20 questions classified as general information questions.

Data Presentation

The questionnaire was administered to four hundred (400) respondents only. Out of the four hundred (400) questionnaires distributed, only three hundred and eighty six (386) copies were returned and only three hundred and six five

(365) were found usable while the remaining twenty one (21) copies were not usable. The table below shows the return rate of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Return Rate of Questionnaire

QUESTION	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Returned and found usable	365	91%
Not usable	21	5%
Not returned	14	4%
Total distributed	**400**	**100%**

Source: Field survey 2012

The above table shows that the return rate is 91% while the mortality rate is 19%. The return rate is higher than the mortality rate. The mortality rate of 19% does not affect the study, because it is insignificant compared to the return rate of 91%. Thus, the copies were considered adequate enough to represent the population. The presentation and the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire were therefore based on the three hundred and sixty five (365) copies which were found usable.

Research Questions

The research questions were fielded using the likert five point scale. The results were presented based on the obtained data.

Research Question I: *What are the factors that hinder girl-child education in Jos metropolis?*

Table 2: Responses on the factors that hinder girl-child education in Jos metropolis

S/n	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD	X	Decision
6.	Poverty is a factor that hinders girl child education in Jos north local government area	142	104	5	44	70	3.5	Accepted
7.	Lack of self actualization also hinders girl-child education	56	61	23	180	45	2.7	Rejected
8.	Culture and religion can also hinder the education of a girl-child	201	77	2	50	35	3.9	Accepted
9.	Sexual violence/abuse and political factors can hinder girl-child education	164	127	0	51	23	3.9	Accepted
10.	All the factors mentioned above can hinder girl child education	110	189	7	24	35	3.8	Accepted

Source: Field Survey 2012

Research Question 2: *To what extent is girl-child education embraced in Jos metropolis?*

Table 3: Responses on the extent to which girl-child education is embraced in Jos north metropolis

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	UD	D	SD	X	Decision
11.	Girl child education is poor in Jos north local government area	99	162	0	50	54	3.5	Accepted
12.	Some parents believe that the girl is only useful in the kitchen	110	88	22	82	63	3.2	Accepted
13.	Some parents believe that education is meant for boys and so	93	129	15	77	51	3.3	Accepted

	refuse the girls access to education							
14.	The attitude of parents to the education of girls in Jos metropolis is poor	88	131	9	42	95	3.3	Accepted
15.	Religion teaches that educated girls are more promiscuous and so refuse to educate them	53	71	0	280	101	2.5	Rejected

Source: Field Study 2012

Research Question 3: *To what extent does the female child have access to education in Jos metropolis?*

Table 4: Responses on the extent to which the girl-child has access to education in Jos metropolis

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	UD	D	SD	X	Decision
16.	Female children do not have access to education like their male counterparts in Jos metropolis	102	190	1	53	19	3.8	Accepted
17.	The girl children from wealthy homes have more access to education than those from poor homes	100	180	0	65	20	3.9	Accepted
18.	Religion forbids the education of girl-child (some religions)	40	168	33	226	159	2.1	Rejected
19.	A lot of girls assume that they cannot perform well in schools and based on that, they take to trading.	39	52	23	160	91	2.4	Rejected
20.	The access to education by the girl child in Jos metropolis is poor	154	149	8	26	28	4.0	Accepted

Source: Field Survey 2012

Research Question 4: *How relevant are the media in promoting girl-child education?*

Table 5: Responses on the relevance of the media in promoting girl-child education

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	UD	D	SD	X	Decision
21.	The media has a crucial to play in girl- education.	201	88	0	24	55	4.0	Accepted
22.	Media programmes and contents are likely to induce positive behaviours towards girl- child education	198	99	0	19	49	4.0	Accepted
23.	The media in Jos metropolis promote girl-child education	101	111	9	49	95	3.2	Accepted
24.	The extent to which the media is used in the promotion of girl- child education in Jos metropolis is poor.	204	91	2	43	25	4.1	Accepted
25.	The mass media and interpersonal communication must be combined to promote girl-child education in Jos metropolis.	46	34	18	162	105	2.3	Rejected

Source: Field Survey 2012

Result and Discussion

Findings from the study show that there are several factors that hinder the access of the girl-child to education in Jos metropolis and by extension, the entire Nigeria. Research question I was answered to the effect that several factors serve as hindrances to the education of the girl-child in Jos metropolis. This is evident in the acceptance of the four items out of the five items which sought to know the factors that hinder the education of the girl child education in Jos metropolis. Particularly, items, 6,8,9 and 10 provided answers to the posed questions. The result shows that poverty, culture, religion, sexual violence and many others, are among the factors that serve as hindrances to girl-child education. Apart from the findings from the questionnaire, the literature review also shows that economic factors, which

implies poverty, sexual violence and abuse, socio-cultural and religions factors, act as hindrances to girl-child education. Thus, Cole (1998) posits that some cultures define women as after thoughts inferior to men, good only for domestic work.

As a result of poverty, fewer boys than girls are withdrawn from school for early marriage and for the fact that they often assist in housework more than boys, they may not have time to study when they come from school. As a result of poverty or economic challenges, the girl-child in most cases has to remain at home for the male child to go to school. Thus, when parents are left with the choice of who to send to school when there is financial predicament, the girls are always at a disadvantaged position. Findings also show that girl-child education in Jos metropolis is embraced to a certain extent. This is evident in the rejection of two (2) items and acceptance of three (3) items. This is evident in items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.The implication of this is that women education in Jos metropolis is embraced, but the extent to which it is embraced is minimal.

Based on the findings, the female children in Jos metropolis do not have access to education like their male counterparts. This perhaps, is because, as earlier stated, when parents are left with the choice of who to send to school, they prefer to send their male counterparts. This finding is evident in item 16, table 9. More so, the data shows that the girl-child from rich homes has more access to education than those from poor homes. This is evident in item 17. The girl-child from the rich home can afford to pay school fees. The parents have the money and so, they can afford to send, both their male and female children to the school.

Findings further show that the media have a very crucial role to play in the promotion of girl- child education. The media are agents of social change; they can go a long way in making people to develop positive attitude towards any issue, since they set agenda for the public to follow. People tend to think along the lines of issues that are raised and treated by the media; as most of the issues and things that people think and worry about are based on what they watch on television, listen to on radio and read in newspapers and magazines. As noted in the literature review, the media have a crucial role to play to: raise awareness of children's rights and responsibilities, to ensure children's rights are promoted and protected, to report on failures and neglect, to highlight successes and to hold government and society

accountable to the commitments made and goals set to promote and protect children's rights, especially the girl- child. Mass media programmes and contents can make the people to have positive attitudes towards girl- child education. It is also evident from the findings that the mass media in Jos metropolis use the media to promote girl- child education, but the extent to which this is done is minimal. This will certainly not augur well because attitude change about girl-child education can only take place when the media constantly carry out programmes that are aimed at promoting girl-child education. The media must be used to introduce the acceptance of girl-child education and also reinforce this attitudinal change towards girl- child education in Jos metropolis and by extension, the entire country.

Conclusion

Education is the right of every girl-child everywhere and key to transforming her life and the life of her community. Without education, girls are denied the opportunity to develop their full potentials and to play a productive and equal role in their families, societies, countries and their world. Therefore, based on the findings arrived at in this study, the researcher concludes that there are certain challenges that confront the girl-child in terms of education; they are: poverty, early marriage, sexual abuse, sexual violence, religion, culture, illiteracy, among others. The media have a crucial role play in the promotion of girl- child education, but the extent to which the media are used in doing this is to a very minimal extent.   Based on the conclusion that there are certain factors that affect girl-child education in Jos metropolis and that the extent to which the media promote girl- child education in Jos metropolis is minimal, the paper therefore recommends that:

i. There is the need to pass laws banning the early marriage practices that normally keep girls out of schools. When a girl marries at a very tender age, it affects her chances of getting a quality education.

ii. Government should provide free education to its citizenry, so that the children from poor homes will have access to education. When there is free education, the girl-child will be sent to school by her parents. Most girls drop out of school because of lack of money. The government should at least, provide free education up to secondary school level so that more people will have access to education. Poverty remains one of the largest barriers to access.

Paying school fees is an impossibility for many families struggling to make ends meet.

iii. The society generally should create avenue to empower parents to enable them send their children to school and also empower the children to sue their parents against any infringement on their fundamental human rights, especially the girl-child.

iv. The media of mass communication, whether print or electronic, should be massively used to promote girl-child education, not only in Jos metropolis, but in the entire country.

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