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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN NIGERIA THROUGH EDUCATION

OLUWAJEMILUA MATHEW TOPE
RESEARCH SCHOLAR
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
THE NEW COLLEGE
CHENNAI

ABSTRACT

The parlance of Nation development is women empowerment. Once a woman is academically empowered she can perform better in every aspect of life. According to Nelson Mandela he said 'education is power if given to someone can change the world'. Though education could be formal or informal, this paper carefully examines the women empowerment through formal education. Women empowerment leads to family and societal development with emphasis on social transformation targeting at restructuring the society to make it more efficient, updated, modernized, creative, participative, value oriented and self-development. Hence, woman empowerment is tantamount to national growth and development. This Study adopts cumulative measures in analyzing female literacy rate, school enrolment, and government expenditure on education using table, ratios and statistical measure to describe the growth in relation to women empowerment. The objectives of this paper are to analyze the growth of government expenditure on education, to compare the female that are in primary, secondary and tertiary education, to examine the female literacy rate. The paper finds out that the government expenditure has increased tremendously over a period of time but female literacy rate is very low compare to that of male, female education is not evenly distributing across the state of the federation.

KEYWORDS

literacy rate, government expenditure, female education, school enrolment.

INTRODUCTION

Women are the greatest asset that a country needs for its economic growth and development, women empowerment through education is not limited to the nation's growth and development but it also cut across the family wellbeing and freedom from self-imprisonments. In a nation where women empowerment is not a priority such would experience a setback in every set objective because women are the principal agent in the operation of the economic activities. They are well connected in terms of trade and commerce, women constitute the largest part of the trade activities that takes place in a given country within a year most especially the local markets and this leads to capital formation and investment. PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU said and I quote "If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Therefore, empowering women through education can save Nigeria from many hullabalooos such as early marriages and untapped potentials. More scholarships are to be granted to female students, most especially those in primary and secondary in order to explore the hidden potentials in women. Women education is not evenly distributed across the country because of cultural and social beliefs and most parents feels that educating a woman is a waste of time because they will later go to their husband house. So, they consider men as the head of the family therefore jeopardizing the right of women. In some part of the country, women are introduced to trade at prime age and while in some part early marriage is rampant. Also poverty is a major constraint to women education; this is the main reason why government intervention is paramount to women empowerment through education. The above mentioned social atrocity against women has forced some young ladies full of potentials into prostitution which in turn leads to spread of sexual transmitted diseases and also results to unwanted pregnancy amongst youths. It is very impotent to examine the women empowerment through education, to understand how government expenditure on education has impact the women education and literacy rate over the years. It also considers the female labour participation against male labour participation. In a nut shell, the women education is a pathway to nation's and family development. Though government expenditure has increased over the years but the outcome on women education are still very low, more efforts are needed on the part of the government to encourage women education most especially in the rural areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jitendra Shinde (2014) discusses women empowerment through education, he defines women empowerment as the process in which the spiritual, political, social or economical status are raised. The main objectives of the paper are; instead of giving women a secondary position in society, they should be given equal status, to change the approach towards women based on sex discrimination, to induce the feeling of self-dependence amongst women, to make women realize their own potential and to provide guidance to them for developing their potential, to create opportunities for them so that they can prove themselves in society and social institutions, also create certain roles for women in economic, political and social arena. He considers literacy rate. The main findings were that the literacy rate of women does not in any way match that of men. As a result, even after 65 years of independence in India, women are still lack behind in social hierarchy as a result of lack of education. Though he made some vital points but he does not cover the topic extensively there other factors that do influence women empowerment through education such as government expenditure on female education, the social awareness of the importance of women education.

Neha Elizabeth Emmanuel (2015) examines empowering women education with special reference to Indian economy. According to her, limited achievements have been made in the area of women empowerment, Indian economy is lagging behind as a result of lack of women participation. He expatiates education gap, it shows that men outnumber women in all higher education programs, except for the master of philosophy (MPhil). Also, there much more men teaching in the system compare to women. Literacy can also provide a status to the citizens in the present world. A person who is educated has access to so much of information around the world. It may be information on educational facilities, health, employment opportunity, legal literacy and so forth, the women empowerment through education is hindered as a result of social perspective about women, women are considered to be second class citizens.

M. Suguna (2011) writes about education and women empowerment in India. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to respond to challenges confronting them. It shows that women education in rural area is still very low. This implies that large womenfolk of the country are illiterates, the weak, backward and exploited. Education brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. So it's not a gain saying when we say women empowerment leads to nation's development, government should take initiative to improve women education both at rural and urban centers that would save the nation from mediocrities and failure on the side of women.

Nabanita Bera (2016) examines women empowerment through education. The objectives of the study are: to know the need of education in women empowerment, to assess the present scenario of women empowerment in India, to know the constitutional provisions and Government efforts for women empowerment, to identify the barriers of women empowerment, to identify the importance of education for achieving women empowerment and to offer suggestions for women empowerment through education. Look at the present scenario in India it may be said that education is the cornerstone of women empowerment which could be achieved through hearty and co-operative efforts of the Government and NGO's and also eliminating the traditional attitude, norms and practices through proper education and guidance. The efforts of women empowerment by the government and social reformers will go in vain unless the women are well educated, self supportive and independent in all spheres of life.

Fapohunda Tinuke. M. (2001) sees higher education as a means of women empowerment in Nigeria. How much a nation progresses has a lot to do with the quality of human resources and educational attainment of its citizens. According to her findings educational gap between men and women is still very wide with women far behind. The paper adopted a descriptive survey method. The findings indicate that as the level of education gets higher, the number of female are lower. There

are relatively more females enrolled in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. Women are poorly represented in our universities. Again there is higher female enrolment in the Arts and humanities and decreased numbers in the Natural Sciences. In technology female enrolment is minimal. More states in Nigeria are still far behind in terms of women education.

RESEARCH ISSUE

Various studies have tried to explore the growth and effects of women empowerment on the society at large; there is no doubt, women empowerment leads to nation’s transformation and well being of the society. There are linkages between government expenditure on education and growth of women empowerment through education most especially in a country where women are encouraging to embrace education by providing an enabling environment for the women triumph. The paper discusses the contributions of Nigeria government expenditure on education to women empowerment through education, it also compares women literacy rate to that of her male counterpart in order to carefully examine the growth of women empowerment of the time.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this paper are;

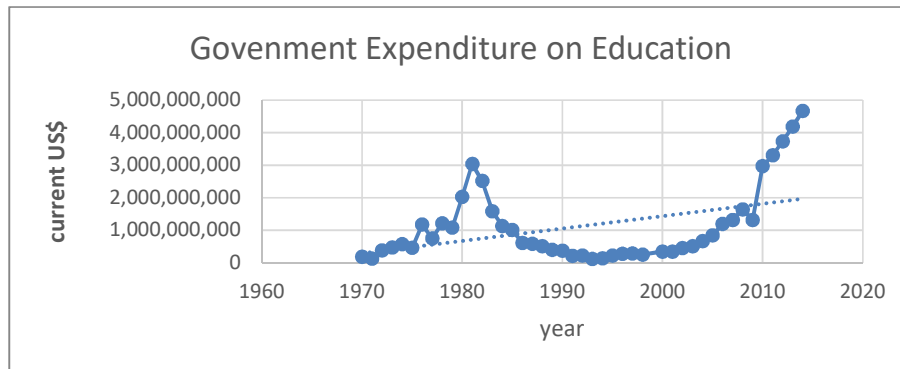
1. To analyze the growth of government expenditure on education
2. To compare the female that are in primary, secondary and tertiary education
3. To examines the female literacy rate

METHODOLOGY

This Study adopts cumulative measures in analyzing female literacy rate, school enrolment and government expenditure on education using table, ratios and statistical measure to describe the growth in relation to women empowerment. This study uses secondary data from the World Bank reports, CBN bulleting, Knoema, Ministry of finance reports and other report from different reputable Journals.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

FIG. 1: GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION



Source: World Bank staff estimates using data from the United Nations Statistics Division's Statistical Yearbook, and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics online database <http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/nigeria/education-expenditure>

Education expenditure refers to the current operating expenditures on education, including wages and salaries and excluding capital investments in buildings, equipment Education expenditure and educational materials (current US\$). The above Government expenditure table gives clear picture of government expenditure on education around 1970-1977 the government expenditure on education was very low, but witnessed a sharp increase between 1978-1981 and this growth continues till now due to oil boom this has a greater impact on education because the larger percentage of Nigeria revenue came from oil sector of the economy. But now that the price of oil has gone down it may affect the government expenditure on education otherwise the government expenditure on education is expected to growth more by 2020 as it's depicted in the Fig 1 as government expenditure on education increases the wages and salary also increases and this in turn motivates the workers to put in their best.

TABLE 1: ESTIMATED POPULATION BY AGE GROUP AND BY SEX

Age Group	Male %	Female %	Overall %
0-4	12.7	12.3	12.5
5-9	14.5	13.6	14.0
10-14	13.2	11.6	12.4
15-19	10.9	10.0	10.5
20-24	7.6	9.0	8.3
25-29	6.7	9.1	7.9
30-34	5.8	7.6	6.7
35-39	5.1	6.4	5.7
40-44	4.9	5.3	5.1
45-49	4.4	4.2	4.3
50-54	4.1	3.6	3.9
55-59	2.5	2.0	2.3
60-64	2.7	2.0	2.3
65-69	1.7	1.4	1.6
70-74	1.7	0.9	1.3
75-79	0.7	0.5	0.6
80-84	0.6	0.4	0.5
85+	0.2	0.1	0.2
Total	100	100	100

Source: National Bureau of Statistics Report

The table above shows the percentage of estimated population by age group and sex, the age between 0-4 constitutes 12.5 in total of which male is 12.7% and Female 12.3%. The age group between age 5-9 made up 14.0 %, Male 14.5% and Female 13.6. Also, 10-14 age groups made up 12.4% of the total population out of which 13.2% is Male and 11.6% is Female. The age group between 15-19 constitutes 10.5% of the population out of which 10.9% are males and female 10.0%.

The age group between 20-24 in total is 8.3 out which male is 7.6 and female is 9.0 it goes on and on like that. But the age group marked by red is active age group at 18years one can be suite to court in Nigeria and the retirement age is 65years of age. Though the population of male is higher than female in Nigeria but if we look at the active age marked in red the percentage of women is more than that of men. That implies that in active working age, women are more than men. Therefore, empowering women through education is very crucial to the success of Nigeria economy. Nigerian economy is more of dependent age, in such case education will be of great help in catch the young stars at their prime.

TABLE 2: ESTIMATED POPULATION OF CHILDREN (6-14YES) NEVER ATTENDED SCHOOL

	Male%	Female%
Overall	7.7	8.5
Urban	2.0	2.7
Rural	10.2	11.2

Source: National Bureau of Statistics

The percentage of the children between ages 6-14 years, the total of male children who never attended any school stood at 7.7 and that of female is 8.5 which mean female are more affected. Both in urban and rural areas female are more affected. Though, the number of female whom has never attended school in rural area is more than that of urban probably because of early marriage or farm work.

TABLE 3: YOUTH LITERACY BY SEX

Youth Literacy	Male%	Female%
English	81.0	71.4
Any Language	89.4	81.6

Source: National Bureau of Statistics

The youth literacy rate by English, male is 81.0 and Female stood at 71.4. Literacy in any language male stood at 89.4 and female is 81.6. The female literacy is low in both English and any language, despite the increase in Government expenditure on education that show that more are needed to be done on female in other to encourage them to embrace education to step up their literacy rate. More awareness is needed in both rural and urban areas to help women discover their potentials through women empowerment programs.

TABLE 4: YOUTH LITERACY BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE

Youth Literacy	Urban%	Rural%	Overall%
English	90.0	68.9	76.3
Any Language	94.3	81.0	85.6

Source: National Bureau of Statistics

The overall literacy in English is 76.3 and that of any language is 85.6, the urban literacy in English stood at 90.0 and rural stood at 68.9. The literacy in any language overall is 85.6, of which literacy at Urban is 94.3 and that of Rural is 81.0. It shows that the rate of literacy in English in rural area is very low compare to the urban area. Also the literacy in any language stood at 85.6 in total, Urban stood at 94.3 and Rural 81.0, this shows that the literacy in any language in rural area is very low compare to the urban. The literacy in any language increases in urban area probably because of the heavy present of foreigners in urban centers.

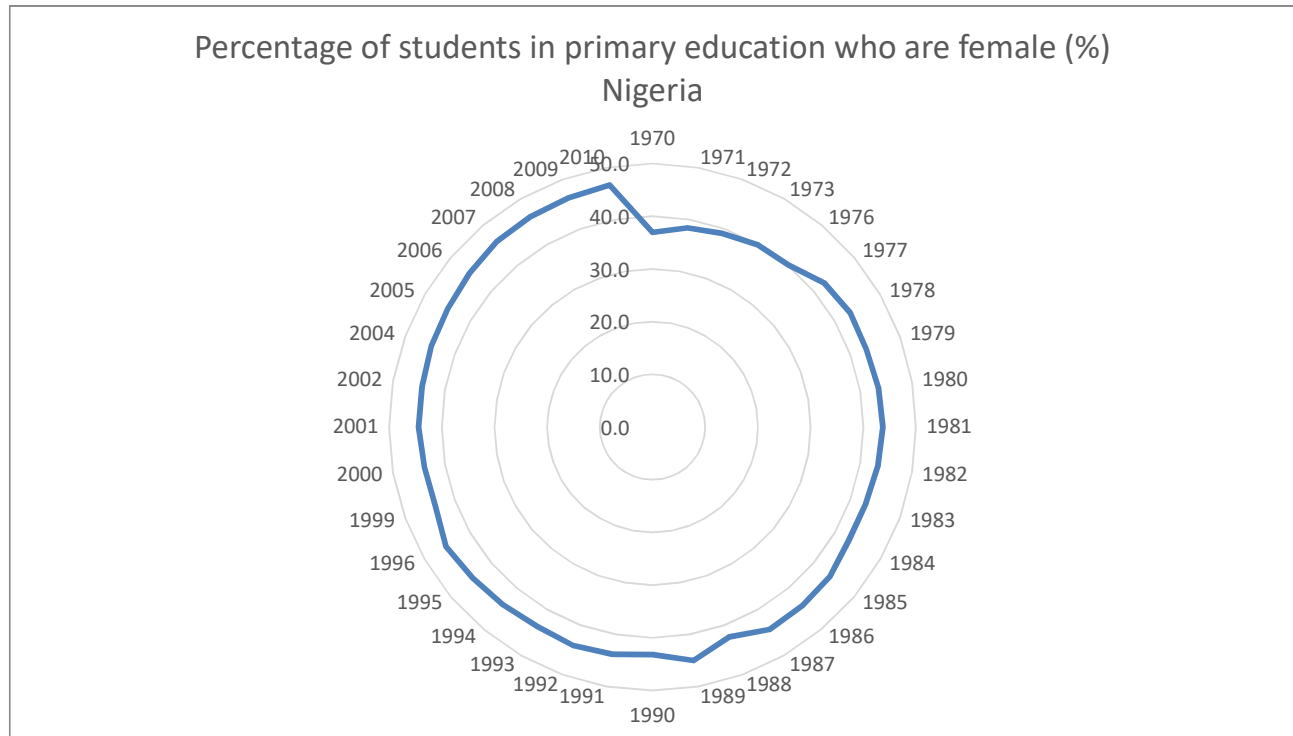
TABLE 5: YOUTH LITERACY RATE BY STATE

State	Literacy in English%	State	Literacy in English%
Abia	95.6	Katsina	43.7
Adamawa	73.3	Keppi	50.2
Akwa Ibom	92.3	Kogi	91.3
Anambra	92.8	Kwara	76.9
Bauchi	39.5	Lagos	95.1
Bayelsa	93.8	Nasarawa	62.9
Benue	84.7	Niger	58.3
Borno	57.3	Ogun	90.4
Cross River	89.5	Ondo	93.8
Delta	88.4	Osun	91.6
Ebonyi	91.9	Oyo	90.7
Edo	89.7	Plateau	79.0
Ekiti	91.6	River	90.8
Enugu	94.2	Sokoto	33.1
Gombe	45.6	Taraba	76.2
Imo	95.7	Yobe	42.5
Jigawa	42.7	Zamfara	41.1
Kaduna	67.3	FCT	69.8
Kano	41.9	Overall	76.3

Source: National Bureau of Statistics

The youth literacy rate by state, Imo state top the list with 95.7 and the next is Abia with 95.6 while the third on the list is Lagos. Enugu has 94.2 while Bayelsa has 93.8, Ondo 93.8, Anambra 92.8, Akwa Ibom 92.3, Eboyin state has 91.0 and Ekiti has 91.6, Osun 91.6. The state that are marked in red are the states below 50% these states are Bauchi, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Kastina, Sokoto, Yobe, Zamfara. The mentioned state falls below 50% literacy in English perhaps because they didn't take education as serious as other states. Government needs to initiate a programs that will uplift their literacy level as other state of the federation.

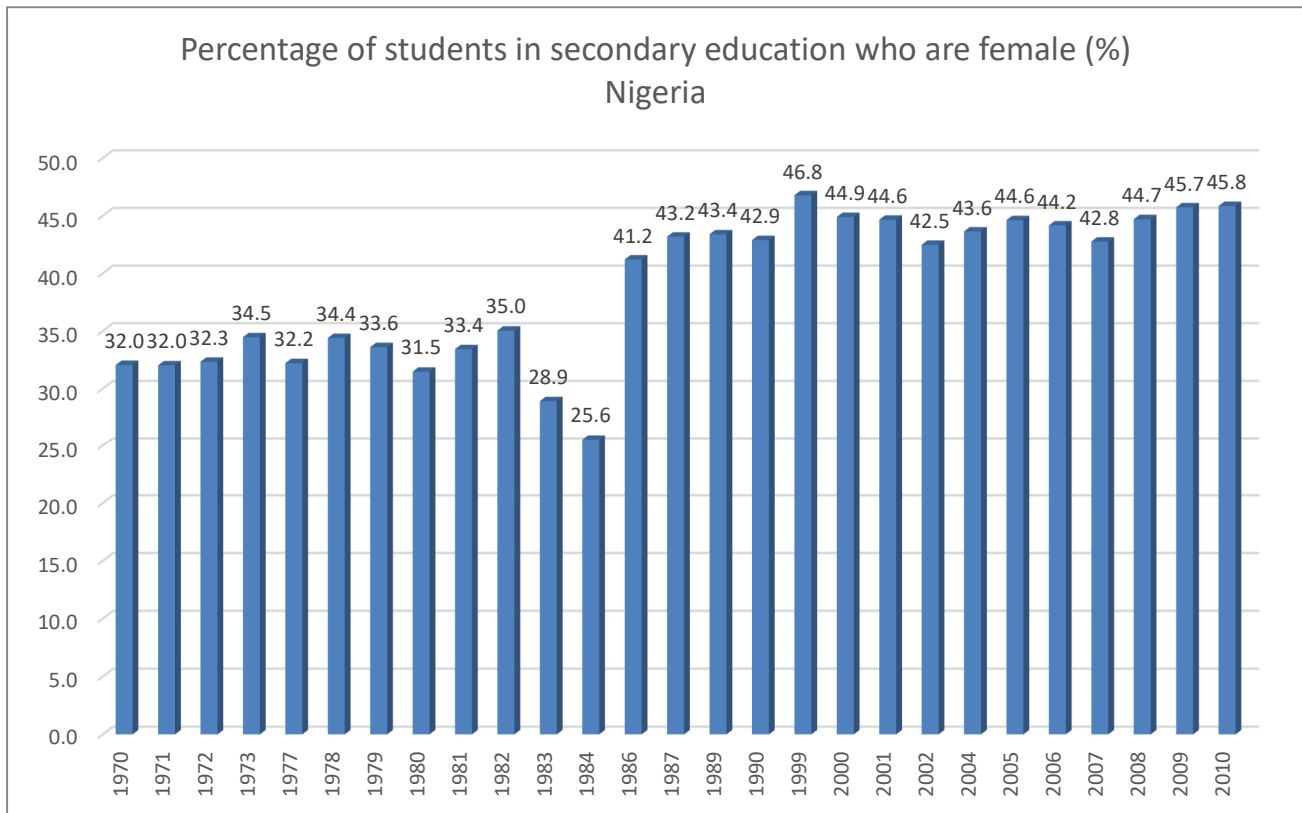
FIG. 2: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION WHO ARE FEMALE



Source: Education Statistics (World Bank) June 2016, Knoema

Percentage of students in primary education who are female has grown from 37.0 in 1970 to 46.7 in 2010. But the growth is very little compare to the total population of women and compare to that male student in primary education. Government needs to work hard in order to speed up the women empowerment through education.

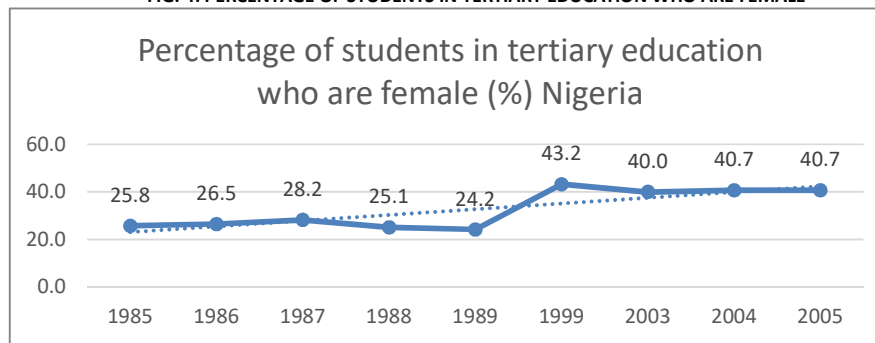
FIG. 3: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION WHO ARE FEMALE



Source: Education Statistics (World Bank) June 2016, Knoema

Percentage of students in secondary education who are female has increase tremendously over the years from 32.0 in 1970 to 45.8 in 2010. But the percentage of female in secondary education are still low compare to that of male and also there is much difference in the percentage of female students in primary school to the percentage of female students in secondary school due to drop out.

FIG. 4: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN TERTIARY EDUCATION WHO ARE FEMALE



Source: Education Statistics (World Bank) June 2016, Knoema

Percentage of female students in tertiary education has increase from over the years from 25.8 in 1985 to 40.7 in 2005 but witnessed much growth in 1999 with 43.2 growth, perhaps due to much awareness programs in that period and also may be many female students were able to pass the entrance examination into tertiary institutions, but very low compare to percentage of female students in secondary education to that of the percentage of female in tatiary education.

FINDINGS

The listed below are the findings of this study.

1. The government expenditure on education has increased over the years, but it's impact is less on female education than that of male education.
2. The estimated population of children (6-14) never attended school is much in female than male.
3. Female literacy rate is very low compare to that of male canterpart.
4. The youth literacy rate is higher in urban but very low in the rural area.
5. The youth literacy rate is very low in Bauchi, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Kastina, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara than other states of the federation.
6. The percentage of students in secondary education who are female witnessed sharp increase since 1986 but still low compare to that male.
7. The percentage of students in tertiary education who are female has increased over the years but compare to male still low.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Women empowerment through education is second to none, because if women are empowered the society will be better off. The Nigerian population is more of dependant since children and youth that may still be schooling constitutes the larger percentage of the population. The population of children that never attended any school is more in the rural area compare to urban perhaps because of child labour. I advise government to initiate a catch them young program which encourages children to take their education more serious and discourage drop out among female pupils.

However, female youth literacy rate is very low compare to male, and youth literacy rate is very low in the rural area compare to urban centers probably because of early marriage and child labour. The literacy rate is very low in the following state of the federation Bauchi, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Kastina, Sokoto, Yobe, Zamfara. Both federal and state government should initiate a program that will encourage more school enrolment through free education and scholarships.

The percentage of female children in primary school is very low compare to that of male probably as a result of poverty and child labour. The percentage of female in the secondary school is also low compare to that of male perhaps because of early marriage and female involvement in agricultural work. The percentage of female in tertiary institutions is very low compare to male probably because many of secondary school female students could not pass the entrance exam to tertiary education or early involvement in business and marriage. There is need for proper implementation of existing child labour law in all the states across the nation. Also more universities are needed to accommodate the timing population of young students aiming at entering into tertiary institutions. Empowering women through education is a tool for women libration and development.

LIMITATIONS

This study surfer some limitations due to lack of data in some area which this study would have loved to cover.

SCOPE OF FUTURE RESEARCH

We hope to expand the scope of this research in the nearest future, most especially in the areas which were not cover extensively in this study due to non availability of data. It will consider the female education awareness level among each states of the federation. This study will consider regression analysis to carefully examine the effect of women empowerment through education in Nigeria.

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