

## TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF GIRL-CHILD INVOLVEMENT IN UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION (UBE) IN ADO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BENUE STATE

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### Abstract

*This study determined the teachers' perception on girl-child involvement in Universal Basic Education Programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. It adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 56 teachers teaching in the UBE upper basic schools in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. There was no sampling as the population was small and manageable by the researchers. The instrument for data collection was researchers' designed questionnaire titled 'Teachers' Perception on Girl -Child Involvement in UBE Program Questionnaire (TPGCIUBEPQ)'. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistics and over all reliability of 0.67 was obtained which was high enough to guarantee the use of the instrument for the study. Data were collected by the researchers with the help of two research assistants. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the three research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The results indicate that teachers agree that most girl-child do not come to school regularly, most girl-child drop out of school; most girl-child like marrying and leaving school for marital life, most girl-child hate coming to school; most girl-child attend school passively among others in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State; It appears gender did not influence teachers' perception on influence of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue state. Thus, male and female teachers have almost equal perception on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area. Factors militating against girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area include that the girl-children are mostly subjected to early marriage by the parents among others. Recommendations were made and the study concluded that efforts should be made by the stakeholders in education towards enhancing girl-child involvement in the UBE programme for ensuring the dream of national development.*

**Keywords:** Universal Basic Education, Perception, Involvement, girl-child, gender.

### Introduction

Girl-child in Nigeria has had series of challenges in a bid to have equal education opportunities with their male counterpart before growing into womanhood. Girl-child refers to a female between the ages of 6-18 years (Mukhtar,

2011). The National Child welfare policy as cited in Ada, (2007) sees the girl-child as a person (female) below 14 years of age. Mukhtar, (2011), states that a girl-child is a female between the ages of 6 – 18 years. Offorma, (2009) perceived the girl-child to be a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen years of age. This period is made up of infancy, childhood, early and late adolescence stages of development. The girl-child is seen as a young female person who would eventually grow into womanhood.

Consequently, girl-child education connotes the processes of involving a girl-child to relevant information which transforms her behaviour in order for her to function properly in the society. Fauzi, (2015) observed that girl-child education is an uninterrupted comprehensive information and drilling process which is geared towards change of desired behaviour of the girl-child by acquiring desirable values, norms, skills for useful living. Furthermore, Offorma, (2009) conceives girl-child education as a process of providing the girl-child with information to help develop her mentally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, politically and economically. This therefore, has placed girl-child education as a veritable instrument for the development of the girl-child in any social system.

Education is a veritable tool for achieving National Development. Sequel to using education to improve the quality of lives in the country, Nigeria has evolved policies on education which were geared towards achieving identified National Objectives. The National Policy on Education (1977, Revised 1981, 1984, 1988, 2004 up to 2017) attest to among other things that Basic Education is for all Nigerian child of school going age. Basic Education refers to early childhood and pre-primary education, primary education, first three years of secondary education and basic functional literacy for out of school children, youths and adults as well as nomadic and migrant fishermen education (Obong, 2006). National Policy on Education (2017) sees basic education as the foundation for sustainable life-long learning. It also comprises wide variety of formal and non-formal educational activities and programmes designed to enable learners acquire functional literacy. Adomen (2007) also observed basic education as education delivery from primary one all through to junior secondary school class three. The author opined that basic education provides greater access to ensure quality of education throughout the federation. In the same vein, Okugbe (2010) perceived basic education as the educational foundation for every child, which provides basic learning and reading skills. According to the report of world conference on education held in Jomtien, as cited in Offorma (2007), Basic Education is perceived to be made free and available to all and sundry, emphasizing free involvements, equity, efficiency and literacy. From this report, the girl-child is required to be involved in acquisition of free and compulsory basic education without social or cultural prejudice. For Nigeria, Basic education comprises both the range of formal schooling as well as wide variety of non-formal public and private educational

activities offered to meet the learning needs of groups of people of all ages, (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2002).

Generally, Education is a fundamental right of an individual. It has been recognized as such, since December 1948 when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (United Nation Education Social Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2003). As such, all forms of gender bias attributed to the involvement of the girl-child in education in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world is considered a denial of fundamental human rights. As Mukhtar (2011) noted that educational discrimination against the girl-child culminates into apparent suppression of her potential and self esteem making her to become a victim of a pre-existing socio-cultural male chauvinism.

The issues surrounding the girl-child involvement in formal education has prompted serious concern in most developing countries of the world today, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where large number of young girls avoid attending to schools. United Nations International Children's Emergency Funds (UNICEF) as cited by Offorma, (2010) observed that global figure of out of school children is estimated to be 121 million out of which 65 million (approximately 53.8%) were girls and over 80% of these girls live in Sub-Saharan Africa. This palpable concern has ignited serious debate among educational stakeholders, experts, international and other socio-educational organisations. It has been a popular maxim that 'educating the girl-child is tantamount to educating the Nation'. To this end therefore, Nussbaum, (2003) observed that, correlation exists between the involvement of the girls in primary school and the Gross National Product as well as increase in life expectancy. This view was further buttressed by UNESCO's (2003) report which intricately connects rapid socio-economic development of a nation on the caliber of women and their education in that country. Accordingly, the report opined that education bestows on woman a disposition for a lifelong acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes, competence and skills.

However, primary school completion rates in Africa have been the lowest in the world and this remains a concern as half of the world's out of school children (OOSC) are concentrated in 15 countries, eight of which are in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ibrahim, 2012). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of girls out of school each year has risen from 20 million in 1990 to 24 million in 2002 (Offorma, 2009). Furthermore, Jonathan, (2011) observed that Nigeria, has 9 million (37%) out-of-school children, which is more than one-third of its primary school age children annually. Northern Nigeria records an abysmal low girl-child education rate than other zones in the country (Tyoakaa, 2014). According to UNICEF, (2007) more than 75% of 3.4 million children out of school are girls. The National School census, (2006), revealed a net enrolment ratio of 80.6% suggesting that a substantial proportion (19%) of primary school age population between 6-11 years are not enrolled in primary schools

nationwide and this represents about 5 million of Nigerian children of the age bracket of 6-11 years old that are not involved in Primary education Programme.

Nigeria's philosophy of Education as cited in the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2017), schedule (3) states that every Nigerian child shall have a right to equal educational opportunities, irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities each according to his or her ability. This therefore, communicates the obligatory commitment of the Nation to provide functional education to the Nigerian child irrespective of gender inclination. In a bid to universalise Basic Education in Nigeria, the Federal Government of Nigeria launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in 1999 by the then President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, in Sokoto (Oguche, 2006). The Universal Basic Education Programme was a landmark educational development, aimed at enhancing the involvement of the girl-child into qualitative basic education in Nigeria and also improve on the universal primary education (UPE) scheme which was launched in 1976 (Opara, 2008). Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme, is a Federal Government Education Programme aimed at universalising involvement to basic education (UBEC, 2008). According to Ahmed, (2008), the UBE structure is made up of nine (9) year educational programme. Six years for primary segment and three (3) years for junior secondary. Ahmed observed that these two levels of education are to be universal, free and compulsory for all Nigerian children aged 6-15.

To ensure that the UBE, Programme is given a legal framework and impetus, the Universal Basic Education Act, was signed into law by the Federal Government in 2004. The UBE Act, 2004 stipulates without prejudice provisions dealing with primary school education. It provides that the Federal Government Intervention under the Act shall only be assistance to the states and Local Governments in Nigeria for the purpose of uniform and qualitative basic education throughout Nigeria. The structure of the UBE Scheme prescribed a nine (9) year uninterrupted involvement in basic education for any school going child in Nigeria. Six years in primary school and three years in the junior secondary (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2006). Before the advent of the scheme, the Nigeria Educational structure comprised six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary, three years of senior secondary and four years of tertiary education (6-3-3-4 system). At this time primary education was free but not compulsory (Oguche, 2006).

Article 3(b) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which was adopted by the United Nations, General Assembly in 1948 as cited by Nwangwu (1979) stipulates that elementary education shall be made compulsory... and that education shall be made generally available. More so, National Policy on Education, (2017) provides for a Universal Basic Uninterrupted education for the Nigerian Child of school going age. To this end, the girl-child possessed all the reserved rights to compete favorably and equally in the acquisition of Basic Education in Nigeria with their male counterparts. This would enable her express her potential and/ or gifts to

the benefit of the society at large. The passage of the UBE, Act in 2004, introduced a fresh commitment of the Federal Government to encourage quality involvement of the girl-child in acquiring Basic Education in Nigeria. Obong (2006) observed that UBE Act mandated all tiers of government to provide free compulsory nine years universal basic education for primary and junior secondary for Nigerian child of school age. In addition, sanctions were placed for parents who do not comply. The Act also provides for free tuition and free services in all public primary and junior secondary schools. (UBE ACT, 2004). In a swift compliance with the National UBE Act, 2004, Benue State on September, 30, 2006 signed into law the State Universal Basic Education Act, earlier passed by the state House of Assembly for the establishment of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to replace the State Primary Education Board (SPEB) (Benue State Government, 2007). At the African Conference held at Ouagadougou, Burkinafaso, in March and April, 1993, it was reported that Nigeria was lagging behind other regions of the world in girl-child involvement in Education with almost 70% of the Nigerian population living below the poverty line, girls are often sent to hawk wares on the streets (UNESCO, 2003).

In the Northern part of Nigeria, the North Central has shown some levels of improvement in the involvement of the girl-child into school, than North -East and North-West. Statistics from the Federal Office of Statistics (2004) shows that literate women constituted only 20% from the North-West, 20% North-East and 45% from the North -Central. This indicates the levels of backwardness of women as compared to men in Northern Nigeria. However, this does not explain the exemption of the Southern Nigeria in the literacy gap between the girl-child and the male. According to the African Development info (2013), South Eastern Zone has the average illiteracy rate of the girl- child at 18.7%, South - West at 17.1% while the South -south is at 13.0%. The literacy gap according to the report was largely blamed on corruption in the educational system.

The National School Census (2006) reported that the number of children out of school in Northern Nigeria is particularly high and the proportion of the girls to boys in school ranges from 1 to 2 boys and even 1 girl to 3 boys in some states. Thus, Tyoakaa, Ifeanyichukwu and Apine, (2014) opined that education of the girl-child in the Northern Cluster has always been thorny. Typically, girl-child education in Northern states follows a specified pattern which ends with the girls being denied from the system, the chances to attend primary school or further their education beyond primary school. Enejere as cited in Tyoakaa et al (2014) states that gender inequality especially in Northern Nigeria is promoted by religious and communal customs, which has grave consequences for both the individual and the society making her a dysfunctional member of the society. Benue like most of the states in the North has witnessed an apparent low involvement rate of the girl-child in the Universal Basic Education Scheme. This has been attributed to factors ranging from social to cultural, economic and political factors. According to Mukhtar et al (2011),

religious misinterpretations, cultural practice, poverty, early marriage, illiteracy, inadequate school infrastructure among other things are some of the factors inhibiting girl-child in most of the states in Northern Nigeria.

More so, Tyoakaa et al (2014), Denga (2002) and Mukhtar (2011) observed that majority of parents in Northern Nigeria perceived the girl-child education as less important, because to them, no matter what level of education the girl-child attains, their hope is to see the girl get married. To some parents, western type of education is termed to be a way to negative transformation and initiation of an individual into materialism, promiscuity and inculcation of western cultural ideologies. Ado Local Government Area, unlike any other Local Government in Benue State has its own major challenges of providing equal basic education to its citizenry especially in the rural areas and particularly to the girl-child. These among other things are the reasons why the researchers are prompted to investigate the teachers' perception of the girl-child involvement in the UBE in Ado local government Area, Benue State.

The dualism between male and female perception on issues has been a fundamental fact of our existence and the attitude towards this issue are diverse in different culture (Guledan, 2011). The differentiation of humankind in males and female is conditioned not only by biology and genetics, but also by those socially learned roles, functions, norms, behavioural patterns and expectations that are associated with maleness and femaleness in concrete society. That is why Guledan (2011) maintained that mainly the clearly distinguished traditional masculine and feminine subjects reveal the existing gender inequality at schools and very often gender determines pupils' academic involvement. Erinsho (2005) refers to gender as socially constructed characteristic roles which are ascribed to males and females in any society based on sexes. According to Fanaz (2007) gender is socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender can be referred to as the categorisation of people into two namely, "male" and "female" through interaction with caretakers, socialisation in childhood, peer pressure in adolescence, and gender stereotype tasks and family roles of which women and men are socially constructed to be different in behaviour, attitudes, emotions or dispositions towards events, objects or activities (Borgatta & Montgomery, 2000). As a rule, boys are mostly involved in education than the girls (Guledan, 2011). However, at a glance, the problem of gender stratification in the modern educational system seems not to exist since girls and boys have equal opportunities for education. That is why in this study attempt was made to determine male and female teachers' perception of girl-child involvement in Universal Basic Education in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Girl-Child involvement in education has being a matter of concern to the government, corporate bodies, educational experts and stakeholders in Nigeria. Sequel to this, the Federal government of Nigeria established the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in order to universalise and increase among other things, the involvement of the girl-child in acquiring basic education in Nigeria. In spite of this, it has been observed that the girl-child involvement in UBE Programme in Ado Local Government seem to be abysmally low. This among other things prompted the researchers, to investigate the teachers' perception on the involvement of the girl-child in Universal Basic Education in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the Teachers' perceptions on the extent of the girl-child involvement in Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State?
2. What is the influence of gender on teachers' perception on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE Programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State?
3. What are the possible factors that could affect girl-child involvement in the UBE Programme?

### **Research Hypothesis**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their perceptions on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State.

### **Methods**

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 56 teachers teaching in the UBE upper basic schools in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. Thus, there was no sampling because the population was small and could be managed by the researchers. A 16 item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers, which was titled Teachers' Perception of the Girl-Child Involvement in Universal Basic Education (UBE) Questionnaire (TPGCIUBEQ) was used to collect relevant data from UBE Teachers in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. The Questionnaire was validated by three experts in the Faculty of Education University of Nigeria, Nsukka, two experts from teacher education and one tests, measurement and evaluation expert. The instrument (TPGCIUBEQ) was trial tested using 10 teachers from junior secondary schools that were not part of the sampled population. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha statistics which yielded reliability indices 0.73 and 0.60 for clusters 1 and 2 respectively. The overall reliability index of the instrument

was 0.67. The coefficient indicated high internal consistency which proved that the instrument was reliable for the study. Data were collected by the researchers with the help of two research assistants. The data collected were analysed using simple descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer research questions. A mean cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. Any mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted while any mean score from 2.49 and below was rejected. The hypothesis was tested using t- test at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

### Research Question One:

What are the teachers' perceptions on the extent of girl-child involvement in Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Ado Local Government Area?

**Table 1: The mean ratings of teachers on their perceptions on the extent of girl child involvement in UBE in Ado Local Government Area**

S/N	Item statements	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Most girl-child does not come to school regularly	56	2.51	1.15	Accepted
2.	Most girl-child drops out of school	56	3.06	0.84	Accepted
3.	Most girl-child likes marrying and leaving school for marital life	56	3.11	1.08	Accepted
4.	Most girl-child hates coming to school.	56	2.53	0.95	Accepted
5.	Most girl-child attends school passively	56	2.80	0.90	Accepted
6.	Some girl-child marries at the age of 14 years and leave school.	56	2.83	1.12	Accepted
7.	Some girl-child has no interest in education at all.	56	2.63	1.09	Accepted
<b>Cluster mean</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>2.76</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

The result in Table 1 shows the teachers' perception on the extent of girl - child involvement in Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. The result indicates that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, had mean values 2.51, 3.06, 3.11, 2.53, 2.80, 2.83 and 2.63 with standard deviations of 1.15, 0.84, 1.08, 0.95, 0.90, 1.12, and 1.09 respectively. This reveals that teachers accept that most girl-child do not come to school regularly, most girl-child drop out of school; most girl-child like marrying and leaving school for marital life, most girl-child hate coming to school; most girl-child attend school passively; some girl-child marry at the age of 14 years and leave school and some girl-child have no interest in education at all, because the mean of the items are above the cut-off mean value of 2.50 for decision taking. The closeness of the standard deviations of all the items to one another indicates that there was no much variation among the responses of the respondents on all the items. The cluster mean value of 2.76 with a standard deviation



of 1.01 is above the cut-off mean for taking decision. This indicates that the participants (teachers) perceive all the items as the extent of girl-child involvement in universal basic education.

### Research Question Two

What is the influence of gender on teachers' perception on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State?

**Table 2: The mean ratings of respondents on the influence of male and female teachers' perception on girl child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State**

S/N	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Male	41	2.77	0.69	Accepted
2	Female	15	2.74	0.78	Accepted
	Grand mean	56	2.76	0.68	Accepted

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of male and female teachers on the extent gender influence teachers' perception of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue state. The result reveals that the mean and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers are 2.77 (0.69) and 2.74 (0.78) respectively. The result also shows that the grand mean and standard deviation scores of the male and female teachers are 2.76 and 0.68 respectively. It appears gender did not influence teachers' perception on influence of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue state. This indicates that male and female teachers have almost equal perception on the level of girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. The standard deviations of the responses of male and female teachers are close indicating that there were no much variations in the responses of male and female teachers on the extent of involvement of the girl-child in the UBE programme.

### Research Question Three

What are the factors that could affect girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area?

**Table 3: The mean ratings of respondents on the factors that could affect girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area**

S/N	Item statements	N	Mean	SD	Decision
8.	The girl-child is mostly subjected to early marriage	56	2.86	1.03	Accepted

9.	Most girl-child are not subjected to early marriage by their parents	56	2.89	0.96	Accepted
10.	Most girl-child are sent to urban areas as house helps against their education	56	2.91	0.70	Accepted
11.	Most girl-child have teenage pregnancy which inhibits their involvement in UBE programme	56	3.29	0.83	Accepted
12.	Cultural belief that girl-child is suppose to be a home keeper debase girl child involvement in UBE	56	2.52	0.90	Accepted
13.	Cultural beliefs that western education exposes the girl-child to promiscuous life affects girl-child involvement in UBE	56	2.56	1.16	Accepted
14.	Transportation problem could affect the girl-child involvement in the UBE programme as located.	56	2.51	1.05	Accepted
15.	Most of girl-child are not properly guided on the need for involvement in UBE programme	56	3.00	0.72	Accepted
16.	Religious misconception affects most girl-child involvement n the UBE programme	56	2.60	0.89	Accepted
	<b>Cluster mean</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>0.91</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Table 3 reveals the factors that affect girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. The result indicates that items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 had mean and standard deviations of 2.86 (1.03), 2.89 (0.96), 2.91 (0.70), 3.29 (0.83), 2.52 (0.90), 2.56 (1.16), 2.51 (1.05), 3.00 (0.72), and 2.60 (0.89) respectively. This shows that teachers accept that factors militating against the girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue comprise the girl-child is mostly subjected to early marriage; most girl-child are not subjected to early marriage by the parents; most girl-child are sent to urban areas as house helps against their education; most girl-child have teenage pregnancy which inhibits their involvement in UBE programme, cultural beliefs that girl-child is supposed to a home keeper debase girl-child involvement in UBE; Cultural beliefs that western education exposes the girl-child to promiscuous life affects girl-child involvement in UBE; transportation problem could affect the girl-child involvement in the UBE programme as most schools are sparsely located; most girl-child are not properly guided on the need for involvement in the UBE programme and that religious misconception affects most girl-child's involvement in the UBE programme, because the mean values of the items are above the cut-off mean of 2.50 for decision making. The data revealed that the standard deviations of all the items

are very close to one another. This shows that the responses of the participants on all the items do not vary much. Thus, there were no much variations on individual responses of the participants on all the items. The cluster mean of 2.70 with standard deviation of 0.91 indicates that all the participants (teachers) accept items 8-16 as the factors affecting girl-child involvement in Universal Basic Education programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State.

### Hypothesis

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their perceptions on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State.

**Table 4: The summary of t-test on the mean difference on the influence of gender on teachers' perceptions on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue state**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig. 2 tailed	Decision
Male	41	2.77	0.69	55	5.03	0.32	NS
Female	15	2.74	0.78				

Table 4 reveals that the t-cal 5.03 is significant at 0.32 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. The inference there from is that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on their perceptions on girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area. This suggests that both male and female teachers appear to hold common views about girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State.

### Discussion

Findings from Table 1 showed that teachers agree that most girl-child do not come to school regularly, most girl-child drop out of school; most girl-child like marrying and leaving school for marital life, most girl-child hate coming to school; most girl-child attend school passively; some girl-child marry at the age of 14 years and leave school and some girl-child have no interest in education at all, in Ado, Local Government Area, Benue state. This finding is buttressing the findings of Tyoaka, Ifeanyichukwu and Apine (2014) who documented that education of girl-child in the northern cluster has always been thorny. The authors reiterate that typically, girl-child education in northern states follows a specified pattern which ends with the girls being denied from the system, the chances to attend primary school or further their education beyond primary school.

Also, findings from Table 2 revealed that male and female teachers have almost equal perception on the extent of girl-child involvement in the Universal Basic Education programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. This finding was further collaborated by the finding of the hypothesis on Table 4 that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the influence of gender on teachers' perception on girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. This suggests that male and female teachers hold the same opinion and position on the extent of girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State. Thus, actually, girl-child hardly undergoes the UBE programme in the study area (Ado, LGA).

On the factors affecting girl-child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area, findings in Table 3 showed that teachers accept that the factors affecting girl child involvement in the UBE programme in Ado, Local Government Area included that most girl child do not come to school regularly, most girl child drop out of school, cultural belief that girl-child is suppose to be a home keeper debase girl child involvement in UBE, most girl-child have teenage pregnancy which inhibit their involvement in UBE programme, cultural belief that western education exposes the girl-child to promiscuous life affects girl-child involvement in UBE programme etc. These findings are in line with Tyoaka et al (2014), Denga (2002) and Mukhtar (2011) who averred that majority of parents in northern Nigeria perceived the girl-child education as less important, because to them no matter what level of education the girl attains, their hope is to see the girl get married. The authors further reiterated that to some parents western type of education is termed a way of negative transformation and initiation of an individual into materialism, promiscuity and inculcation of western cultural ideologies.

### **Conclusion**

The study was conducted to determine teachers' perception of girl- child involvement in universal basic education (UBE) in Ado LGA, Benue State. It was predicated by the theoretical assumption that the UBE is for all and the popular maxim that 'educating the girl-child is tantamount to educating the nation'. It was also assumed that girl-child could be highly involved in the UBE programme for enhancement of their opportunities towards promoting national development. Educating the girl-child would impact her with requisite skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that would be deployed to improve on the development of the local government, state and the Nation at large. The findings of this study established that teachers agree that most girl-child do not come to school regularly, most girl-child drop out of school; most girl-child like marrying and leaving school for marital life, most girl-child hate coming to school; most girl-child attend school passively; some girl-child marry at the age of 14 years and leave school and some girl-child have no

interest in education at all in Ado Local Government Area, Benue State; gender did not influence teachers' perception on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE programme. Thus, male and female teachers have almost equal perception on the extent of girl-child involvement in UBE programme in Ado Local Government Area among others. In all, the study concluded that the issue of the girl-child involvement in Universal Basic Education is a collaborative effort. Thus, teachers, principals, community leaders and other stakeholders in education ought to take girl-child education very seriously, because educating the girl-child is a sure way to rapid national development.

### Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- (1) Governments should make law prohibiting early marriage in Benue State, to enable the girl-child attain the UBE programme for a better future for the girls and Nigerian society in general.
- (2) Governments should sponsor awareness programmes through radio and televisions' giggles on the importance of the UBE programme in the lives of girl-child for catching the girl-child who are not aware of the relevance of the programme for individual and national development.

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