

**INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' INCOME STATUS ON PUPILS' ENROLMENT AND RETENTION IN NOMADIC SCHOOLS IN NORTH- CENTRAL GEO- POLITICAL ZONE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The income status of nomadic parents will to a large extent determine the enrolment and retention of pupils in nomadic schools. A child from a well to do family will always get the necessary support needed in terms of schooling while reverse will be the case for a child from a poor background. This study therefore examined the Influence of Parents' Income Status on Pupils' Enrolment and Retention in Nomadic Schools in North- Central, Nigeria. The study was guided by two objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses. The objectives were to determine the influence of parents' income status on enrolment of pupils in nomadic schools in North- Central Nigeria, examine the influence of parents' income status on retention of pupils in nomadic schools in North- Central Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with the population of 42, 845, consisting of 17, 498 nomadic parents and 25, 347 nomadic children. A multi stage sampling technique was used in selecting 120 nomadic parents and 261 nomadic school pupils. Two instruments were used in collecting data for the study, which were the proforma and a questionnaire. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions while Chi square statistics was used in testing the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed significant influence of parents' income status on enrolment of pupils in nomadic schools in North- Central, Nigeria. The findings also revealed significance influence of parents' income status on retention of pupils in nomadic schools in North- Central Nigeria. The study concluded that income status of nomadic parents is a key factor that inhibits enrolment and retention of pupils in Nomadic schools. It was however recommended among others that it is imperative for herders to improve their income status by embracing the modern techniques of grazing and also by diversifying their sources of income to enable them send their children/wards to schools.

**Key Words:** Parents' income status, Enrolment, Retention, North- Central.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Pastoral nomads constitute an important segment of Nigerian population and make immense contributions to the socio-economic development of the nation just like other special groups. They are found in virtually all the regions of the country, with a large concentration in the north-eastern, north-western and north-central (Sa'ad, 2015). The activities of nomads involve both men and women and the men usually own the cattle while women own the diary product, making

it their duty to sell the milk. Pastoral nomads, like other people in the world need basic education as enshrined in the motto of Universal Basic Education programme (Education for all is the responsibility of all). The nomadic education program started officially in November 1986, after the Yola National Workshop on Nomadic Education.

Income level of nomadic parents has an influence on parents' ability to pay fees and provide other school-related levies, such as uniforms and stationeries used in school (Hunt, 2008). According to Nair and Rekha (2004), poverty has a negative impact on school readiness, environmental influence on child development, school development programmes and can lead to emergence of slums. Ferguson (2002) also posited that nomadic children from low income families start school behind their peers from affluent families and are less likely to remain in school as compared to those from rich families. Father's income has a great impact on nomadic children's retention or attrition from school. Children from poor families immersed in credit constraints are three times more likely to drop out of school in rural China (Hunt, 2008). School fees and other costs may cause children's dropout from school when their parents cannot handle these costs. Colclough, Rose and Tembon (2000) submitted that parental inability to pay fees was the main cause of not attending schools by many children in Nigeria while Miako (2012) also added that school levies lead to absenteeism, poor transition from primary to secondary schools and even drop outs because many parents are affected by their earnings.

As a result of the aforementioned problem, many nomads became adamant in their opinion and prefer keeping their children at home rearing animals than sending them to schools to acquire western education. Fortunately, the few ones that attended and completed schools among the nomads were successful. These successful nomads today are considered as the leaders who represent the nomadic community in national and international issues.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The poor trend in school enrolment and retention among pupils of nomads in the North-Central part of Nigeria has become a worrisome issue in recent times. Major Stake-holders in Nigeria primary education such as parents and school administrators have continued to lament on this unfortunate development. Despite past and current efforts on the part of the Federal and state Governments in the North-Central Geo-political Zone, Nigeria towards promoting the education of Nomadic pupils within the region, the trend in school enrolment and pupil's retention in schooling continued to decline. Some researchers and stakeholders have blamed this unfortunate development on lack of interest as well as poor attitude to learning on the part of nomadic pupils in the North-Central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria, while others opine that governments have not been aggressive in its campaign towards enhancing the primary education for nomadic pupils.

However, it is important to note that the income status of the home where a pupil emanates may go a long way in determining his/her enrolment and retention in the course of learning. While some pupils may receive the required support and motivation from parents, others may not be fortunate to receive such from their parents. Furthermore, the incessant movement of some nomadic parents in the course of their cattle business which is their main source of income may also influence school enrolment and pupils' retention. If pupils' enrolment and retention in

nomadic schools is to be improved in North-Central, then the influence of income status of nomadic parents cannot be overruled. Therefore, the main thrust or focus of this study is to examine the influence of income status of parents on pupils' enrolment and retention in nomadic schools in North central Nigeria.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to examine the influence of income status of parents on pupils' enrolment and retention in nomadic schools in North- central Geo political zone, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to;

1. examine if there is any influence of parents income status on pupils' enrolment in nomadic school in North-central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria;
2. asses if there is any influence of income status on pupils' retention in nomadic school in North-central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria;

### **Research Questions**

Based on the aim and objectives of the study, the study answered the following research questions;

1. Is there any influence of parent's income status on pupils' enrolment in nomadic schools in North Central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria?
2. Is there any influence of parent's income status on pupils' retention in nomadic schools in North Central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant level.

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant influence of parent's income status on enrolment of pupils in nomadic school in North-central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria;

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant influence of parent's income status on retention of pupils in nomadic school in North-central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Parent's Income and Children Enrolment and Retention**

Household poverty and income has an influence on parents' ability to pay fees and provide other school-related levies, such as uniforms and stationeries used in school (Hunt, 2008). According to Nair and Rekha (2004) poverty has an impact on school readiness, environmental influence on child development, school development programmes and can lead to emergence of slums. Ferguson (2002) revealed that nomadic children from low income families start school behind their peers from affluent families and are less likely to remain in school as compared to those

from rich families. Father's income has a great impact on nomadic children's retention or dropping out of from school. Children from poor and those from families immersed in credit constraints are three times more likely to drop out of school in rural China (Hunt 2008). School fees and other costs may cause children to dropout when their parents cannot raise these costs. Colclough et al (2000) records that parental inability to pay fees was the main cause of not attending and dropping out of school for many children in Nigeria while Miako (2012) revealed that school levies lead to absenteeism, poor transition from primary to secondary school and even dropouts. Many parents are affected by how much they earn. The cost of educating their children is hampered by their daily income. Many do not seek for quality. Those who can afford a little send their children to primary school while others are totally unable. To others it is deliberate while others consider their earnings. Many see education as being too expensive to afford in that those who take their children to primary school are said to be rich.

The effect of affordability by low income earners derails many children's enrolment and retention. Some parents tend to delay the age at which some of their children get enrolled to cover up the gap of financial hardships as many children in school at the same time may result to stain in the family small earnings. Studies done on the relationship between parental income and children's enrolment (Ferguson 2002) reveal that children from low income families start school behind their peers from affluent families and are less likely to remain in school as compared to those from rich families.

### **Problems of Nomadic Education in Nigeria**

Nomadic education in Nigeria is affected by defective policy, inadequate finance, faulty school placement, incessant migration of students, unreliable and obsolete data, and cultural and religious taboos. While some of these problems are solved by policy and infrastructure interventions, most of the problems are complex and difficult to solve. The persistence of these problems is causing the roaming Fulani to remain educationally backward.

The shortage of funds limits government efforts to provide formal education in Nigeria. States that have started nomadic schools are burdened by the costs. The state governments are finding it hard to pay the teachers, supply furniture, or repair the furniture. Some states are closing down the schools or ordering them to go on extended vacations because the classrooms are inhabitable. Insufficiency in funds has led to inadequacy in education among the rural dwellers (Wennergreen, Antholt, and Whitaker 1984). Lack of financing compels the students to bear partial cost of training. As they face more fiscal hardships, the nomadic schools are asking the children to bring their own teaching materials to the school.

While the oil fortunes of the seventies have helped Nigeria fulfill its Universal Primary Education dream, the fiscal slump of the late eighties has narrowed the country's ability to implement the nomadic education program. With economic hardship, is widespread corruption. The mismanagement of money by officials in the NCNE and the ministries of education in purchases, contract awards, and payments of teachers have also hampered the progress of the educational program. Page five of the 1990 NCNE Annual Report comments on the abuse of funds:

The drawback of the initial implementation of the program was that the expenditure of money disbursed to the state was not carefully monitored to determine its proper use in paying teachers' salaries, provision of appropriate classrooms and teaching materials. The progress of the mobile schools has been curtailed by the shortage of roads and lorries in the rural areas. Having committed to several capital-intensive, post-independence projects, the government of Nigeria is experiencing difficulties pursuing educational programs involving large capital outlays. The financial burden has forced some schools to operate in the open. While learning in unroofed or partially-roofed space may be possible during dry days, teaching under such conditions is impossible on wet days. Flood, muddy terrain, leaking roofs, and uncooperative weather have resulted in the loss of school days.

Lack of money also forces the government to rely on volunteers or unqualified teachers. The poor salaries cannot attract a caliber of staff with the commitment to educational enrichment of the Fulani. Scarcity of chalks, books, pencils, and blackboards, for example, undermines teaching. Students are taught how to write on the sand with their bare hands. Requests from schools for children to bring learning kits dampen the spirit of parents who think they have already made enough sacrifices by letting their children go to school rather than go on grazing.

The uncertainties of the movements of the Fulani make educational planning and student monitoring difficult. Unscheduled out-migration due to environmental failures or conflicts between the farmers and the pastoral Fulani disrupts school operations and classroom composition. In one school visited, about half of the pupils who have attended the school in the previous season have moved. Many Fulani ascribe erratic attendance and low enrolment in school to habitual movement. Seventy-one percent of the Fulani interviewed in this research affirm that shifting settlements prevent the children from improving their literacy. As a result of the movement, the teachers face the extra task of adjusting their teaching to fit the dynamics of the transient population.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

Descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. Afolabi (2013) and Osuala (2012) recommended that descriptive survey research design was ideal when collecting data that was used to ascertain the impact of one variable on another. They also remarked that this method unveils data, interprets, synthesizes and integrates and interprets the data appropriately.

#### **Population of the Study**

The target population of the study was 42, 845 consisting of 17, 498 nomadic parents and 25, 347 nomadic school children. The population of pupils was obtained from the records of the State Nomadic Commission in Nasarawa, Plateau, Niger, Kogi, Benue, Kwara States and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Also, the population of the parents is obtained from the National Population Commission (2006).

**Table 1: Distribution of Population of the Study**

SN	State	Number of Nomadic Schools	Population of Parents	Population of Pupils	Total Number of Respondents
1	Nasarawa	76	3125	4934	8059
2	Plateau	92	Not Monitored	Not Monitored	Not Monitored
3	Niger	210	2566	3112	5678
4	Kogi	9	1987	2514	4501
5	Benue	23	2041	3385	5426
6	Kwara	89	3314	4719	8033
7	FCT, Abuja	44	4465	6683	11,148
	<b>Total</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>17, 498</b>	<b>25, 347</b>	<b>42845</b>

*Source: National Population Commission 2006, States Nomadic Commission 2018.*

### Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 381 subjects was used for the study. This was based on suggestion of Paul (2006) who opined that in a population of more than 25,000 and less than 50,000, the sample size should be 381 (Appendix V). Due to obvious imbalance on the number of parents and pupils in the selected schools, the researcher used proportionate sample technique to distribute the sample for nomadic parents and pupils according to their population. Based on this, the sample of parents used for the study was 120 and that of pupils stood at 261. Purposive sampling technique was used to select four states out of the 7 states in North-central zone. The choice of purposive sampling technique was informed based on the level of participation of the states in nomadic education and monitoring by NCNE. The selected states were Nasarawa, Benue, Kwara States and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

To avoid bias in the selection of the schools that were used for the study, simple random sampling technique was employed. In this approach, Nomadic schools in each state were written on a plain paper, folded and drop in a box. A research assistant was called to pick three from each box. The schools selected were used as the sample schools. Finally, purposive sample technique was also used to select 120 nomadic parents and 261 nomadic pupils for the study. The choice of using purposive sample technique in selecting nomadic parents and pupils was informed by the stability and level of commitment of parents to nomadic education and the attendance of pupils in the classes.

The breakdown of the sample for the study is as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Distribution of Sample for the Study**

SN	State	Sample Schools	Population of Parent	Sampled Parents	Population of Pupils	sampled pupils
1	Nasarawa	Jere	412	12	452	25
		YakubuAgyaragu	266	8	295	17
		Dauri	187	6	228	13
2	Benue	Mbaikye	453	13	480	27
		Mkomon- Waya	191	6	221	12
		Abinsi	175	5	202	11
3	Kwara	GaaDawo	168	5	210	12
		Igbo- Irese	123	4	147	8
		GaaGaladima	108	3	138	8
4	FCT, Abuja	Dakwa	974	29	1256	70
		Tudun Fulani	589	18	622	35
		City Gate	381	11	409	23
<b>Total</b>			<b>4027</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>4660</b>	<b>261</b>

**Methods of Data Collection**

Two instruments were used for this study which were the proforma and the questionnaire developed by the researcher titled“ Questionnaire on the Influence of Parents’ Income Status on Enrolment and Retention of pupils in Nomadic Schools (QINPISERPINS)” which contained 50 items. The instrument was designed on 5- point Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Weighted mean of 3.0 and above was used as bench mark for decision.

**Administration of the Instrument**

The instrument was administered using face to face delivery method by the researcher and 4 research assistants with prior arrangement with the concerned nomadic schools and parents. The researcher with the help of 4 research assistants followed the nomadic parents in their respective locations where the contents of the instrument was translated to Hausa language for those that cannot read and write to determine their attitude towards nomadic education under Universal Basic Education. With the aid of the instructors of the sampled nomadic schools, the consent of the pupils, privacy of information, other ethical sureties was guaranteed to the pupils.

**Technique for Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics of Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions framed for the study. The hypotheses were however tested at 0.05 level of significance using chi square obtained from SPSS version of 50.

In answering the research questions any weighted mean below 3.0 was considered disagree while above was considered agree. In testing the hypotheses formulated, the p-values (probability values) of F-cal served as the basis for acceptance or rejection of hypothesis being tested. Hypotheses whose p-values were found to be less than 0.05, they were rejected while for those greater than 0.05 they were retained.

**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Answers to Research Questions**

**Research Question One:** Is there any influence of parent’s income status on pupils’ enrolment in nomadic schools in North Central Geo political zone of Nigeria?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of parents’ income on enrolment of pupils in nomadic schools in North Central Nigeria**

S/N	ITEMS	N	SA	A	UN	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	I have the financial capacity to pay school fees as such I enrolled my children to school.	381	52	76	0	50	203	2.28	1.58	Disagree
2.	I enrolled them to school because I can afford buying them writing materials.	381	159	55	0	94	73	3.35	1.65	Agree
3.	Because I can sow school uniform for my children I enrolled them in school	381	72	134	18	87	70	3.31	1.44	Agree
4.	I have enough income to feed my children in school so I enrolled them in school.	381	40	93	1	66	181	2.33	1.52	Disagree
5.	I have the finance to pay PTA levies for my children that is why I enrolled them in school.	381	186	74	0	31	90	3.70	1.62	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>								<b>2.99</b>	<b>1.56</b>	



Table 3 shows the influence of parent’s income status on pupils’ enrolment in nomadic schools in North Central Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that a mean of 2.28 parents do not have the financial capacity to pay school fees for their children and also a mean of 2.33 that in not above the criterion mean used as benchmark, indicates that parents don’t have enough income to feed their children in school, which cause low enrollment rate in schools. The result from the study further revealed that with a mean of 3.35, 3.31 and 3.70 respectively, parents agreed that they not enrolled their children in school because they can afford buying writing materials, sow school uniform and finance to pay P.T.A levies.

**Research Question Two:**Is there any influence of parent’s income status on pupils’ retention in nomadic schools in North Central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria?

**Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of parents’ income on retention of pupils in nomadic schools in North Central Nigeria**

S/N	ITEMS	N	SA	A	UN	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1.	I retained my children in school because I can continue paying their school fees till graduation.	381	76	88	0	42	175	2.60	1.68	Disagree
2.	I can afford buying my children writing materials till completion of their school that is why I retained them.	381	99	133	10	17	122	3.18	1.64	Agree
3.	I can cater for my children in school so I allow them to continue schooling.	381	99	75	15	69	123	2.89	1.64	Disagree
4.	I have the financial to change my children’s uniform when it is necessary so I retained them in school.	381	122	56	32	83	88	3.11	1.60	Agree
5.	I pay PTA regularly for my children to continue schooling till they finish.	381	195	91	36	42	17	4.06	1.20	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>								<b>3.17</b>	<b>1.55</b>	

Table 4 shows the influence of parent’s income status on pupils’ retention in nomadic schools in North Central Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that a mean of 2.60 and 2.89 parents

disagreed that they can retain their children in school because they can afford the fees till graduation and also cannot cater for their children in school. The result also shows that parents agreed ( $X = 3.18$ ) that they can afford buying my children writing materials, can afford new uniform for their children ( $X = 3.11$ ) and can also pay for their PTA levies ( $X = 4.06$ ) regularly. This indicated that parents' income status has influence on pupil's retention in Nomadic primary schools in North Central Geo-political Zone, Nigeria.

**Hypotheses Testing**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant influence of parent's income status on enrolment of pupils in nomadic school in North-central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

**Table 5: Chi-square test statistics on the Influence of Parents' income on the Enrolment of pupils in nomadic school in North-central Nigeria**

Variables	df	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	$\chi^2_{cal}$	$\chi^2_{tab}$	p-value	Decision
Parental Income*ENR	380	.05	50.71	26.3	.000	Reject HO <sub>7</sub>

*Level of significance  $\alpha < 0.05$  significant Level; ENR = Enrolment*

Table 5 shows the Chi-square statistics ( $\chi^2$ ) on the influence of parental income on the enrollment of pupils in nomadic school in North Central, Nigeria. The result revealed that there is a significant influence of parental income on the enrollment of pupils [ $\chi^2_{(380)} = 50.71; p < .05$ ]. The result of this study implies that parental income has a significant influence on retention of pupils in nomadic school in North Central, Nigeria. The formulated hypothesis was therefore rejected.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant influence of parent's income status on retention of pupils in nomadic school in North-central Geo-political Zone of Nigeria.

**Table 6: Chi-square test statistics on the Influence of Parents' income on the Retention of pupils in nomadic school in North-central Nigeria**

Variables	df	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	$\chi^2_{cal}$	$\chi^2_{tab}$	p-value	Decision
Parental Income*RET	380	.05	84.59	26.3	.041	Reject HO <sub>8</sub>

*Level of significance  $\alpha < 0.05$  significant Level; RET = Retention*

Table 6 shows the Chi-square statistics ( $\chi^2$ ) on the influence of parental income on the retention of pupils in nomadic school in North Central, Nigeria. The result revealed that there is a significant influence of parental income on the retention of pupils [ $\chi^2_{(380)} = 84.59; p < .05$ ]. Findings from the study imply that parental income has a significant influence on retention of

pupils in nomadic school in North Central, Nigeria. The formulated hypothesis was therefore rejected.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the income status of nomadic parents is a key factor that inhibit the enrolment and retention of pupils in nomadic schools in North central Geo political zone of Nigeria.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study therefore recommended that;

1. It is also imperative for herders to improve their income status by embracing the modern techniques of grazing and also by diversifying their sources of income to enable them send their children/wards to schools.
2. There is need for government at all levels, other relevant agencies and the philanthropists to provide scholarship to nomadic pupils to further their education.

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