

*Original Research Article*

# Gender difference in enrolment in senior school certificate examination economics among secondary school students in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria

<sup>\*1</sup>Dr. Bitrus Glawala Amuda, <sup>2</sup>Hannatu Durkwa and <sup>3</sup>Apagu Kidlindila Bulus

## Abstract

<sup>1</sup>Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri, Borno State

<sup>2</sup>Department of Business Education, Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri, Borno State

<sup>3</sup>Department of Education, University of Maiduguri

\*Corresponding Author's E-mail:  
[bitrusglawala@yahoo.com](mailto:bitrusglawala@yahoo.com)  
Tel.: 08038887613

The study determined gender difference in enrolment in SSCE Economics among senior secondary school students from 2006 to 2010 academic sessions in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. Two objectives were raised, one research question was answered and one hypothesis was tested in the study. Ex-post factor research design was used. The population of the study consisted of all senior secondary school students in Maiduguri Metropolis. A purposive sampling technique was used to select sample from twenty-eight co-educational secondary schools in the Metropolis. The total number of students stood at 50715 which consisted of 35395 males and 15320 females. Students' SSCE results for 2016/2017 to 2009/2010 were collected and analysed using percentages for the research question and t-test of independent samples for hypothesis. The results of the study revealed that there were more males enrolled than females in Economics. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that female students should be encouraged to study Economics. The state Ministry of Education should organize capacity building development and workshop to educate parents and the female students about the significance of Economics.

**Key words:** Enrolment, Gender difference, Hypothesis, Research questions, Sampling technique

## INTRODUCTION

Much has been done in the field of education to unravel gender inequality in enrolment. Research evidence in most of these studies show that there is gender difference in school enrolment in favour of the male (Okwo, 2001). Observations show that males' enrolment is higher than that of the females in primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The highest gender was recorded in Universities (males=73% and females=27%), Primary schools (males=56% and females=44%) and secondary schools (males=53% and females 47%) (Jibril, 2000; Agu and Sam, 2013; Nzewi, 1996).

The importance of Economics in any educational system especially in secondary schools cannot be over emphasized. Adu (2002) stated that the study of Economics serves a useful purpose in modern life. It provides facts and shows what may be expected as outcomes to certain lines of conduct. It helps us to decide which of several alternatives to choose. It charges its recipient to make wise choices that satisfies their needs in the face of unlimited wants and resources. Economics is vital in understanding how the world and its systems operate as it builds problem solving skills and develop

one's logical way of understanding problems. Economics is also responsible for determining the prices of goods and services including lands, buildings, stocks and bonds. It helps determine vital systems to ensure that people are secured financially and have the required expertise or knowledge to survive in today's civilized society and provides techniques on how to handle or disperse your services and investments (Serakalala, 2014).

Different researchers (Ezeliora and Ezeokana, 2010; Imbabeka, 2003; Makhubu, 1998; Nzewi, 1996; Oke, 2000; Owulabi, 2001; Salman, 2011; Yahaya, 2004) observed gender gap in the trend and pattern of enrolment in Nigerian Universities. The general observation by these studies is that males and females are not equally represented in Nigerian Universities. Contrary to this observation, Okeke, Okulo and Ureh (1996) examined that gender enrolment in East Central Nigeria are experiencing decline in male enrolment at secondary schools. The total number of males in 1996/97 was 21419, which a sharp decline in male enrolment by 1000 in Anambra State. Data from the Federal Ministry of Education indicates gender gap in primary school enrolment in 2001 at 17.8% in favour of males. At junior secondary school level, females' share of enrolment was 44% in 2001 while at senior secondary level 55% for males and 45% for females in the same year throughout the country (FGN, 2003).

Suara (1994) presented a depressing picture of female enrolment at the tertiary level. According to the statistics for the 1984/85, academic session 5.3% females registered for engineering courses as opposed to 94.6% males. Similarly, statistical data for environmental design revealed that out of 4,979 students, the females numbered only 657 representing 13.1%. The trend was the same for females in the Technical Colleges where 75.3% males and 24.7% females enrolled. In the same vein, 78.8% males and 21.2% females enrolled in the Polytechnics.

Gender is a broad analytical concept, which has grown out of attempts to understand the in equality between men and women. The concept not only concerns women but also highlights women's roles and responsibilities in relation to those of men. Gender system is variously defined in different societies and in almost all, it is asymmetrical, and one gender is considered inferior to the other (Mangwilat and Abama, 1997). According to UNICEF (2005), gender disparity in education is so central to performance of the millennium development goals. Even more significantly, the development of women, Ekezei (1994) pointed out that though school enrolments in Africa have increased in the last few decades, girls' education still lags behind that of boys especially after primary school. This is because an equal opportunity in male and female enrolment in schools is still far from being accomplished. In line with the above, UNICEF (2005) observed that gender gap has

been the results indicating that there was more male enrolment both in primary and secondary schools in Bayelsa State, closing steadily ever since 1980. Girls have experienced greater gains in school participation than boys have across all regions and in most developing countries. Adebayo (2004) views that inequality in enrolment and performance of students at all levels of education should be eradicated in Nigeria. UNESCO (1992) revealed that at post primary levels, gender gap widens in some countries, but narrows in others. According to FGN (2007), promoting gender equality is now globally accepted as a development strategy for reducing poverty levels among women in technical education especially when they are in primary schools. Dayo (2004) observed gender disparity in schooling among the younger population, where female school enrolment in primary and secondary education falls behind male.

Mallum and Mogba (1999) observed that nowhere in the world do women participate adequately with men in formal education. In the third world countries especially male enrolment out number female by a ratio two to three (2:3). Obikeze (1999) examined the constraints to male enrolment in Anambra State and the result revealed that a steady rise in women's educational enrolment against a dwindling male enrolment. He further observed the enrolment trends in secondary school in Anambra State, which showed that female percentage enrolment was greater than male. In 1998/99 academic session in Anambra State, secondary school enrolment distribution was 33% males and 67% females. On the contrary, Mangwilat and Abama (1997) pointed out gender imbalance between boys and girls in favour of boys are a common feature of enrolment trends in educational institutions in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In support of the above, Okeke (1996) conducted a study on gender enrolment in south-eastern states of Abia, Anambra, Enugu and Imo. He found that there is a decline in male enrolment at secondary school level. This is in spite of the increasing number of schools and enrolment since independence. Abama also said that despite government policies aimed at educating males and females equally, the last decades have not seen any improvement in women's opportunities for education. According to Badejo (2001) classroom, enrolment patterns in Yobe State showed that consistently boys and girls are not equally represented in schools. For years, girls have represented less than 40% of the total number of students in both primary and secondary schools. The results of the same study on interaction of some socio-economic determinants of women education in Yobe State showed that there is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female respondents toward women education.

UNESCO statistics in INICEF (2005) shows that at primary school level in Nigeria, the boys out-number the girls in enrolment generally, apart from Abia, Akwa-Ibom,

Anambra, Ekiti, Enugu, Imo, and Lagos. Osun, Oyo and River States. The same trend was observed at the secondary and tertiary levels. According to UNESCO (2005) in a critical analysis of the data on female access to and participation in education shows that the situation is worst in the northern part of Nigeria- a situation which has been in existence for nearly a century with little improvement. This situation is supported by ESA in UNICEF (2005) which reported that gender imbalance increases from primary education through secondary to tertiary education and is greater in the northern states of the country than the southern states.

This above assertion in conformation with the findings of Awe and Adedeji in UNICEF (2005) who discovered that women enrolment has been persistently low. Such studies have been spared by the campaign for the education of girls in the wake of the international year of women in 1975. Most of these studies also revealed that there are more gender gap in all the geographical zones in Nigeria, the magnitude of the gaps as well as their causes differ from zone to zone. The gaps were more in the northern zone when compared with the gaps in the southern zone. Still in UNESCO (2005)'S report, male enrolment was 93.6% as against female enrolment of 6.4% in Yobe State in 1992. Badejo and Obikeze (1999) found that there was a rise in male enrolment in Yobe State against female and there were more female enrolment in Anambra state against the male.

Azimi (1993) stated that in most of highly populated countries, enrolment for girls lag behind that of boys by ten to thirty percent. Gender disparity in school enrolment in favour of males is further depicted in a UNICEF report as cited by Orire (1996). According to the report, out of 130 million children who do not have access to primary education in developing countries, 81 million are girls. Jibril (2000) notes that enrolment of males is higher than that of females in primary schools, secondary schools and universities. The highest gender differential is recorded in Universities followed by secondary and primary schools. However, indications are that there may be regional differences in the enrolment of male and females in Nigeria. Okeke, Okwo and Oreh (1996) in their study found that the four south-eastern states of Abia, Anambra, Enugu and Imo are experiencing decline in male enrolment at secondary schools, but more males are enrolled at primary schools.

### Statement of the Problem

One of the problems that are attracting public concern in Nigeria today is gender disparity in enrolment distribution of students in schools. This observable disparity has been blamed on a number of factors including social, economic and cultural stereotyping. Despite, the importance of economics education in impacting knowledge; by making use of some approaches in

enhancing the understanding of economics as a concept. In addition, to achieve the objectives of the curriculum, and the sizeable amount of money government allocates to education and the relentless efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in public enlightenments toward improving gender difference in Nigerian educational system, the actualisation of the objectives has not been effectively met. The difference between male and female in pattern of education are causing disparity in gender participation and enrolment distribution in Nigerian secondary school, especially in Economics in Maiduguri Metropolis secondary schools of Borno State, Nigeria. Researchers at different point in time came up with different factors, yet there is no conclusive answer to the problem. This is what informed this study.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to determine:

- (i) Enrolment distribution rate in Economics in senior secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolis from 2006 to 2010 and
- (ii) Gender difference in enrolment in Economics among senior secondary school students in Maiduguri Metropolis from 2006 to 2010

### Research question

One research question was answered which is: (i) what is the enrolment distribution rate between male and female students in senior secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolis from 2006 to 2010?

### Hypothesis

One null hypothesis was tested in the study:

**H<sub>01</sub>**: there is no significant gender difference in the enrolment distribution in Economics among senior secondary school students in Maiduguri Metropolis from 2006 to 2010.

## METHOD

### Research design

The study was ex-post factor whose design was causal comparative. An ex-post factor is a design in which the independent variable has already been determined and the researcher observed the dependent variable. The researcher studied the independent variable in retrospect for their possible relationship to an effect on the dependent variable (Kerlinger, 1970). In this study,

**Table 1.** Results of percentage of students' enrolment distribution rate between male and female students in senior secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolis from 2006/2007 to 2009/2010 academic session?

Year	SS1			Class SS2			SS3		
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total
2006/07	2598(72.2)	1000(27.8)	3598	2071(64.2)	1154(35.8)	3225	3520(73.3)	1282(26.7)	4802
2007/08	2476(66.0)	1274(34.0)	3750	2330(62.0)	1427(38.0)	3757	3745(72.8)	1402(27.2)	5147
2008/09	2652(67.7)	1266(32.3)	3918	2421(61.2)	1537(38.8)	3958	3901(73.6)	1401(26.4)	5302
2009/10	2818(71.1)	1143(28.9)	3961	2871(71.4)	1143(28.6)	4019	3992(75.6)	1286(24.4)	5278

**Table 2.** Results of t-test of Independent Samples on Gender Difference in Enrolment in Economics among Senior Secondary School Students from 2006/07 to 2009/10 session

Session	Gender	Mean	S.Dev.	t-test for Equality of Means			Remarks
				T	Df	P value	
2006/2007	Male	144.47	104.57	5.391	112	.000	Significant
	female	66.12	33.20				
2007/2008	Male	149.32	108.27	5.123	112	.000	Significant
	Female	71.39	38.32				
2008/2009	Male	157.46	113.26	5.505	112	.000	Significant
	female	71.84	38.36				
2009/2010	Male	169.89	133.82	5.772	112	.000	Significant
	female	65.04	30.03				

gender difference, which is the independent variable, was examined retrospectively against enrolment (the dependent variable) with a view to establish a link between them.

### Population of the study

The study population was all available senior secondary schools (SS1-SS3) who offer Economics from 2006 to 2010 in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State. There were twenty-eight senior secondary schools and nine were selected purposively for the study. The reason for purposive selection was that fact that majority of the schools were not operational due to the insurgency in the state. Only those students who sat for SSCE Economics were involved in the study while all SS1 to SS3. 50715 students enrolled, out of which 35395 were males and 15320 females. A total of 8699 students' results were used out of which 5679 were males and 3020 females. Data collected were analysed using percentages to answer the research question and t-test of independent samples to test the hypothesis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research question one

What is the enrolment distribution rate between male and female students in senior secondary schools in Maiduguri

Metropolis from 2006/2007 to 2009/2010 academic session?

The research question was answered by year, gender and class as follows:

The table above indicates enrolment rates of males and females. The results show that more male than female enrolled in secondary schools from 2006/07 to 2009/10 academic sessions.

H01: There is no significant gender difference in enrolment distribution of students in Economics from 2006/07 to 2009/10 sessions.

The results in the tables above show a significant difference in gender enrolment in Economics. This difference was in favour of the male students. During the years under review, more male students enrolled in Economics than female students in all the schools in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State. This is in conformity with the findings of Jibril (2000) and Azimi (1993) who found that there is gender disparity in favour of male students in enrolment in schools. The results also conforms with the findings of Dayo (2004); Badejo (2001) and UNESCO (2005) which all revealed that classroom enrolments in Yobe State consistently indicates more male than female students.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, more males enrolled than females in schools in Maiduguri Metropolis from 2006/07 to 2009/10 academic sessions in Economics. This could imply that the male are more knowledgeable

about the importance of Economics than the female. Hence the following recommendations: (1) There should be an enlightenment campaign about the importance of Economics to female students; (2) Female students should be properly guided and counselled on the needs of women education generally and (3) School should organise, career guidance, workshops and seminars on the role of Economics in the society.

## REFERENCES

- Adedayo OA (2004). A cross-section investigation of gender difference in tertiary mathematics among pre-services NCE mathematics teachers in Lagos: *The Nigerian Teacher Today*, 1(1)93-98.
- Adu CN (2000). Gender difference in school enrolment: Any change in trend. In Okpara, E. N. (Ed.). *Gender issues in educational development*, 8(252-260).
- Agu NN, Sam OA (2013). Gender Enrolment Statistics in Higher Education Courses: Federal University. *J. Emerging trends in Education Research and Policy Studies*, 4(3)517-524.
- Azimi S (1993). Education and Empowerment for Women. *Panel Proceedings of Education for all Summit of Nine High Population Countries*, New Delhi. UNESCO.
- Badejo OO (2001). Interaction of some Socio-Economic Determinants of Women Education in Yobe State. *Annals of Borno, University of Maiduguri Press* 17(18)47-56.
- Dayo A (2004). *School Administration, Perception of Students' Poor Performance in Public Examinations and Mass Failure in Public Examinations*. Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan.
- Ezeliora B, Ezeokana JO (2010). Inhibiting Influences of some Traditional Practices in the home on Girl-Child's Scientific Development. *Int. J. FAWE, Nigeria*, 2(1)31-42.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2003). *Education Sector Status Report*. Lagos SIBON Books Ltd.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2007). *National Gender Policy*. Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Abuja, Nigeria.
- Inhabekhai CI (2003). Analysis of Female Participation in University Education at the University of Benin, Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Foundations and Management*, 3(1)101-109.
- Jibril M (2000). An Overview of Nigerian University System. *Seminar Paper for University Managers*.
- Makhubu LP (1998). *The Right to University Education and Equal Opportunity Particularly for Women: The Challenges for our Time*. In Shaban, J. (Ed.). *Higher Education in Africa: Achievements Challenges and Prospects*. Dakar: UNESCO, BREDA.
- Mallum AY, Mogbo I (1999). The Female Gender Access and Environmental Impediments and Performance in Education: Counselling Challenges for the next Millennium. *The Counsellor*, 17(1)129-133.
- Mangwilat J, Abaina E (1997). *Adult Education for African Women*. Policy Issue in Adult and Community Education. Kaduna: Nigeria, Mainasara Publishing Co.
- Nzwei V (1996). Involving Women in Science, Technology and Mathematics Obstacles: Remedies and Challenges for National Development. *Paper Presented at 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Gender and Science and Technology Association, India*.
- Obikeze N (1999). Constraints to Male Enrolments in Anambra State. *The Counsellor*, 17(1)235-241.
- Okeke EAC (1996). *Sexual Discrimination: Attracting Women into Science Based Occupations: Problems and Prospects*; England Beach Tree Publication.
- Okeke EAC, Okwo FA, Oreh CA (1996). Enrolment Trend and Drop-out of Boys in Primary Schools in selected States of Nigeria. *Unpublished UNICEF Research Report*.
- Okulo FA (2001). *School Enrolment and Gender: Trends and Implications Towards Gender Equality in Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.
- Oreh CI (1996). Pallant, J. (2001). *SPSS Survival Manual*. Buckingham: University Press.
- Owolabi J (2001). Towards Improving Female Participation in Science, Technology and Teacher Education. *J. Lagos State University, Institute of Education*, 2, 123-128.
- Salman ME, Yahaya LA, Adewara AA (2011). Mathematics Education in Nigeria: Gender and Spatial Dimensions of Enrolment. *Int. J. Sci.* 3(1)1520.
- Serakalala P (2014). Economics in action and the benefits of studying Economics. Retrieved from <http://whystudyeconomics.ac.uk/blog/2013>.
- Suara SC (1994). Women and Technology. *Lead paper presented at the annual conference of National Association of Technical Teachers, Federal College of Education, Gusau, Zamfara State, Nigeria*.
- UNESCO (1992). *Education for all: an expanded vision*. World conference on education.
- UNESCO (1998). *The state of education in Nigeria*. UNESCO, Lagos office.
- UNESCO (2005). Dealing with Gender Issues in Nigerian Colleges of Education. *Afr. J. Paris*, 3(1)15- 20.
- UNICEF (2005). A report on gender disparity and primary education. New York: [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org).
- Yahaya LA (2004). Disparity in Enrolment of Male and Female Undergraduates in Science and Technology based Faculties at University of Ilorin: Implication for Counselling. *Nigeria J. Counselling and Applied Psychology*, 2(1) 186-201.