

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND PEER PRESSURE AS PREDICTORS OF FEMALE STUDENT'S DROPOUT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL IN KOGI-EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF KOGI STATE**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined socio-economic status and peer pressure as correlates of female dropout of secondary school in Kogi East Senatorial District. It adopted a correlation survey research design. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study comprised all female students dropout from secondary schools in Kogi-East Senatorial District. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 448 respondents. The instrument used for data collection for the study was the researcher- made questionnaire titled "Female Students Dropout Socio-Economic Status and Peer Pressure Questionnaire ((FSDSESPPQ)". The instrument was validated by experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was estimated as 0.78 which was considered reliable. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient and Regression Analysis were used for data analysis. The findings of the study include: there exists a moderate but positive relationship between socio-economic status and female students dropout of secondary school. Also, there exists a moderate but positive relationship between peer pressure and female students dropout of secondary school. Based on the findings of the study, a conclusion was drawn that socio-economic status and peer pressure predict female dropout of secondary school in Kogi East Senatorial District. Also, suitable recommendations were made among which were: the government should train and employ enough professional counsellors in the study area that will be conducting neighbourhood workshops and seminars on consequences of school dropout on individuals, parents and the society, and the various governments, non-governmental organizations, religious leaders and concerned individuals should sponsor peer counselling in the area.*

**Keywords:** Socio-Economic Status, Peer Pressure, Female Dropout, Secondary School

### **Introduction**

Adolescents are very important set of people all over the world. The destiny of every nation lies in their hands. It is expected that the adolescents should bring about economic, social, political, educational, cultural, and technological

development in the nation. Ironically, it would appear that most female students do not complete their education especially at secondary school level. This has negative impact on national development. For example, when students drop out of school, some of them engage in maladaptive behaviour such as sexual promiscuity, drug abuse, roaming about the streets, shop lifting or even armed robbery. Some female students drop out of school to marry or engage in economic ventures. Bukoye (2017) submitted that the rate in which female students drop out of school to engage in diverse economic activities calls for review of policy statements.

Education is the greatest gift parents and the nation can give to the young ones. Ikechukwu-Iloмуanya (2017) defined education as a tool for overall change in economic and social development. This suggests that education is a means of imparting knowledge in people, and helping them to develop their skills for their own good as well as for the good of the society. It is the foundation of the development of any society in all spheres of life. Whether formal or informal, education is responsible for the socialization of individuals in the society. It has a multi-dimensional facet with a well-defined goal of making life better for citizens. Education develops individuals academically, socially, culturally, economically, politically, technologically and otherwise thereby bringing about total development of the individuals. Education helps individuals to discover their potentialities which can help them to function adequately in the society. Popola and Mohamedl (2017) posited that education contributes to economic productivity, social development, intergeneration education, social equity, and sustainability of development efforts. Thus, a society or nation uses education to mould individuals by subjecting them to a selected controlled environment so as to help them attain social competence and optimum development. This helps them to be acclimatized to the culture in which they are born in order that they may advance it.

The broad aim of secondary education as stated in the National Policy on Education is preparation for useful living within the society (FRN, 2014). This implies that individuals should be trained to acquire cultural values and norms so that they can become useful to themselves, and the society at large. The development of any nation is dependent on the level of education attained by its population.

A common feature observed in most developed nations is higher attainment in education while the reverse is the case in the developing nations. Bukoye (2017) asserted that Britain had 98% education attainment, United States of America 89% while Sudan and Nigeria had 59% and 33% respectively on development indicators in 2012. Thus, there is a noticeable gap in educational attainment of developed and developing nations. World Education forum held in Dakar Senegal in 2000 targeted that by 2015 all children should have access and complete education of good quality all over the world.

Despite the effort of Nigerian government to ensure that all children complete their education so that they can be useful members of the society, school children still dropout of school. In a gender study carried out in Nigeria by Amalu (2014), it was reported that between 1987- 1992, 47% of the total number of female school children dropped out of school while, only 16% of boys dropped out during the same

period. Statistics has shown that in 2004, about 7.3 million children dropped out of school in Nigeria and 65% of them were girls while 35% were boys. The female children completion rate was 76% while that of male children was 85%. (UNICEF, 2004). In 2008, 70.4% of children were out of school out of which 42.2% were girls and 20.8% were boys. According to Bukoye (2017), between 2009 and 2013, more than 45% of girls have dropped out of school in Niger Delta, Nigeria. School dropout is not just a problem in Nigeria, but it cuts across the globe. Statistics in 2005, 2009, 2011 and 2012 showed a worrisome report from Sub-Saharan Africa and Nigeria where the number of girls that were out of school rose from 24 million in 2002, 27 million in 2009 and 35 million in 2012. School dropout is a problem all over the world especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and East Asia, the Pacific and Nigeria where about 83% of them are girls (UNICEF, 2012). Thus, there is need for researchers to pay urgent attention to the predictors of school dropout especially female dropout.

Female could be seen as the sex of an organism, or part of an organism, that produces non-mobile avalegg (egg cells). This has to do with being a girl or woman. School dropout is a situation whereby a student leaves school for one reason or the other without graduation (Alika & Egbochukwu, 2010). This implies that school dropout is a situation where a student leaves school without finishing his/her studies. In operational terms, female dropout refers to a girls who withdraws from secondary school prematurely without obtaining any certificate. Incidence of female dropout is on increase in Kogi East Senatorial District of Kogi State (Omotere, 2011).

In Kogi East Senatorial District of Kogi State, many female students leave school without completing their studies. This has several repercussions on the people which include: reliance on the family and the public for assistance, homelessness, prostitution, teenage pregnancy, early marriage, low self-esteem, involvement in criminal activities, and unemployment (Omotere, 2011). Some girls are barred from acquiring formal education, and in a situation where they are allowed to attend schools, majority of them are eventually withdrawn for one reason or the other. Thus, it is of the interest of the researchers to find out whether or not socio-economic status and peer pressure are predictors of female students dropout of secondary school.

Literature sources have revealed that causes of female dropout among secondary school students include: poor socio-economic status, peer pressure, poor academic performance on the part of the students, lack of interest in school work, broken home, religion, cultural belief, and parents' low educational level. Other causes of dropout include; expulsion from school, laziness on the part of the students, harshness of the teacher, ill health, early marriage, and premature pregnancy (Obikeze, 1999, Sailor, 2004 & Bukoye, 2017). This means that causes of female dropout from secondary school are many. In this study, the researchers have focused on socio-economic status and peer pressure as predictors of female dropout of school.

Socio-economic status refers to the measure of influence that the social environment has on individuals, families, communities and schools (Ray, 2007). On the other hand, Arthur (2009) viewed socio-economic status as the measure of an individual's family economic and social position based on the amount of wealth the

individual has which can be determined by looking at the family's income and assets. This implies that socio-economic status means relative standing in the society based on income, power, background and prestige. In operational terms, socio-economic status refers to the position of parents in relation to others in the society with respect to education, money, social class and achievements. Parents' socio-economic status can predict school dropout. This has been established by researchers in empirical studies. Ugorji (2016) reported that there is a relationship between school dropout and socio-economic status. The study also reported that 64% of reasons for male dropout of school is attributed to socio-economic status. Manaster (2007) earlier posited that low socio-economic status leads to early withdrawal from school. The researchers would like to find out whether peer pressure can also predict female dropout of secondary school.

A peer is a person who is approximately the same age as another. In most cases, peers are heavily influenced by others of their age (Ikechukwu-Iloмуanya & Onyechi, 2016). In many cases, peers are heavily influenced by others of their age bracket where ever they find themselves. Peer pressure could be seen as a force exerted by people that are influenced by ideas, values and behaviours either positively or negatively. A good degree of learning occurs within peer interaction. In the context of this work, peer pressure refers to influence female students have on their fellow female students of the same age which makes them to dropout from school.

Considering the challenges faced by the government and people of Kogi East Senatorial District of Kogi State as a result of female dropout from secondary school, this study sets out to find out whether socio-economic status and peer pressure are predictors of female dropout of secondary school in the study area.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does socio-economic status predict female dropout of secondary school?
2. To what extent does peer pressure predict female dropout of secondary school?

### **Hypotheses**

For the purpose of this study, the following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Socio-economic status will not significantly predict female dropout of secondary school.
2. Peer pressure will not significantly predict female dropout of secondary school.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a correlation survey research design. The justification for the choice of this design for the study was informed by the fact that it enabled the researchers to ascertain from the opinions of the respondents if socio-economic status and peer pressure are predictors of female student dropout of secondary school. The study was carried out in Kogi East Senatorial District of Kogi State. The inhabitants

of the area are mainly farmers that produce agricultural products like yam, maize and beans. However, some of the inhabitants of the area are educated and work in the civil service. The population of the study comprised all female dropouts from secondary schools in the nine Local Government Areas that make up Kogi East Senatorial District. It was not possible for the researchers to get the total population of female dropout from secondary schools in the study area because it is not documented. However, people around the villages, streets, mechanic workshops, building sites and motor parks helped the researchers to identify female students that dropped out of school.

The sample for the study was 448. Accidental sampling technique was used to pick female students that dropped out of school who are by chance available in eight local government areas out of the nine LGAs that make up the district. The instrument used for data collection for the study was the researchers-made questionnaire titled "Socio-Economic Status and Peer Pressure Female Students Questionnaire (SESPPFSQ)". The instrument comprised two clusters namely cluster A and B. Cluster A was made up of 13 items which elicited information on socio-economic status and female students dropout of secondary school while cluster B consisted of 9 items which elicited information on peer pressure and female students dropout of secondary school. The instrument was designed in 4-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE: 4 points), High Extent (HE: 3 points), Low Extent (LE: 2 points) and Very Low Extent (VLE: 1 point). The instrument was validated by two experts in Guidance and Counseling and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, it was trial tested on 20 female students that dropped out of school in Igalamela LGA of Kogi State. Cronbach Alpha method was used to estimate the internal consistency of the instrument. Cluster A obtained reliability co-efficient value of 0.80 while cluster B obtained 0.76. An overall reliability co-efficient of 0.78 was obtained which was considered high enough that the instrument is reliable. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient and Co-efficient of Determination were used to answer the research questions while Linear Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

- 1. Research Question One:** To what extent does socio-economic status predict female students' dropout of secondary school?

**Table 1: Pearson's Product Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on Socio-economic Status and Female Students Dropout**

Variable	Mean	Std.	N	r	R <sup>2</sup>
Socio-economic status	47.25	7.77	448	0.61	0.37
Female Dropout	47.49	8.04			

- 2.**  $\alpha=0.05$ ,  $R^2$ = co-efficient of determination

The data in Table 1 shows that the correlation obtained socio-economic status and female students dropout was 0.61. This means that there exists a moderate positive relationship between socio-economic status and female student dropout. The table also indicates that the coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.61 was 0.37. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) indicates that 37% of socio-economic status predicts female dropout. This indicates that 63% of variation in female student dropout of secondary school is attributed to other factors not studied (such as family size, family climate, school climate, religious belief, early marriage) other than socio-economic status.

**Hypothesis: One: Socio-Economic Status will not Significantly Predict Female Students Dropout**

**Table 2: Regression Analysis of Socio-Economic Status and Female Students Drop**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Regression	21214.557	1	21214.557	246.857
Residual	35922.422	418	85.939	
Total	57136.979		419	

**a=0.05= Significant**

Data in Table 2 shows that an F-ratio of 246.85 with associated probability value of .00 was obtained. The probability level is less than the level of significance of 0.05 level. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Inference drawn is that socio-economic status significantly predicts female students' dropout of secondary school. Research Question Two: To what extent does peer pressure predict female students dropout secondary school?

**Table 3: Pearson's Product Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on Peer Pressure and Female Students Dropout**

Variable	Mean	Std.	n	r	R <sup>2</sup>
Socio-economic status	47.25	7.77	448	0.55	0.31
Male Dropout	26.47	11.72			

a=0.05, R<sup>2</sup>= co-efficient of determination

The data in Table 3 shows that the correlation coefficient obtained for peer pressure and female dropout was 0.55. This means that, there exists a moderate positive relationship between peer pressure and female dropout of secondary school. The coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) associated with the correlation coefficient was 0.31. This coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) indicates that 31% of peer pressure predicts female students dropout and 69% of the variation is attributed to other factors (Like

family size, family climate, school climate, religious belief, early marriage ) other than peer pressure.

**Hypothesis Two: Peer Pressure will not significantly predict Female Students Dropout.**

**Table 4:Regression Analysis of Peer Pressure and Female Students Drop**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Regression	1766.087	1	1766.087	184.77
Residual	339961.571	418	95.602	
Total	57626.651			

**a=0.05= Significant**

Data in Table 4 shows that an F-ratio of 184.77 with associated probability value of 0.00 was obtained. The probability level is less than the level of significance of 0.05 level. The null hypothesis is therefore not accepted. Inference drawn is that peer pressure will significantly predict female dropout of secondary school.

**Discussions**

The study found that there exists a moderate positive relationship between socio-economic status and female students dropout of secondary school. This finding tallies with that of Ugorji (2016) who discovered that socio-economic status of the parents predicts female students' dropout of secondary school. The finding of this study is also consistent with the observations of Okpa (2008), Omotere (2011), UNSAID (2011), and Bukoye (2017) that school dropout among secondary school students is a function of socio-economic status of the family. The finding of this study however, contradicts the observations of Popola and Mohammad (2017) that female students dropout of school could be as a result of early marriage and religious belief. Therefore, socio-economic status contributes to female students' dropout of secondary school. Being of low socio-economic status is instrumental to early withdrawal from secondary school as parents from the lower class may not be able to afford all that it takes to retain their children in secondary school. However, other factors not studied such as family size, climate and the school climate may lead female students drop out of secondary school.

Regression analysis between socio-economic status and female students dropout of secondary school students reveals that socio-economic status significantly predicts female dropout. This finding corroborates the finding of Ugorji (2016) and Bukoye (2017) who observed that socio-economic status is a predictor of school dropout. This is evident in moderate correlation and the corresponding coefficient of determination.

The study also revealed that a moderate positive relationship exists between peer pressure and female dropout. This finding is consistent with the finding of Ikechukwu-Iloмуanya and Onyechi (2017) that observed that the peers influence their members in their behaviour. That is, if some members of peer group dropout of school, there is tendency for other members of the same group to leave school as well without completing their education. The finding of the study is also consistent with the finding of Ugorji (2016) that age of the students is a significant factor determining the rate of dropout among students. However, this finding is contrary to the observation of Popola and Mohammed (2017) that early marriage, economic factors and religious belief are basically the reasons for female students withdrawal from school.

The regression analysis of the relationship between peer pressure and female dropout of secondary school reveals that peer pressure significantly predicts female students dropout of secondary school. This finding is consistent with the finding of Ikechukwu-Iloмуanya and Onyechi (2017) that peer pressure significantly predicts the behaviour and decision of peer members..

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of the study, a conclusion was drawn that socio-economic status and peer pressure are responsible for female dropout of secondary school.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The government should train and employ enough professional counsellors in secondary school. These counsellors will be conducting workshops and seminars on effects of school dropout on individuals, parents, and the society at large.
2. The various governments, non-governmental organizations, religious leaders, and concerned individuals should sponsor peer counseling.
3. Free and compulsory education should be introduced in the state to enable the adolescents to obtain the relevant education that will enable them to function adequately in the society.

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