



SUSTAINING GIRL TERTIARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN AMINU SALEH COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AZARE, FOR PEACE AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN BAUCHI STATE

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Abstract

Sustaining girl child tertiary school enrollment cannot be silence when the vision of Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) is sought for. Owing to the role of girl child (women) in developing a stable, prosperous and healthy nation. Reason girl child education has received global attention and favored by SDG 4 and 5. A retrospective study designed with data collected from academic office on five years' girl child tertiary school enrollment before, during and after UNICEF Female Teachers Trainee Scholarship Scheme (FTTSS). It reveals regressive nature of girl child tertiary school enrollment in Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare, Bauchi State. Highest enrollment was during UNICEF FTTSS, with 2,937, while worse enrollment was After UNICEF FTTSS), with 132. For sustainable girl child school enrollment, the authors recommended an avalanche of national and international order and efforts towards sustaining girl child tertiary school enrollment through continuous funding, providing incentives, widespread advocacy and sensitization.

Keywords: *Sustaining. Girl Child, Tertiary School, Enrollment, Peace, Poverty Reduction*

Introduction

Sustainable peace and poverty eradication is attainable through socio-economic development built on the foundation of education for all. Education helps improves individuals' living standard and permits

meaningfully contribute to social, political and more importantly the economic development of the nation. It helps facilitate educational pursuit among younger generation. Building a fairer, more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable world which no one is left behind is the vision offered by Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). All the 17 sustainable development goals have something to do with women. For this reason, sustaining girl child tertiary school enrollment cannot be silence when sustainable development goals sought for a fairer, more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable world.

Girls' child access to education has received global attention, reason ending gender inequality in education is favored by Goal 4, and Goal 5 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), these goals as outlined, seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (UN, 2014). Owing to the important role of girl child in the development of stable, prosperous and healthy nation states whose citizens are active, productive and empowered as stated by British Council, (2014) and achieving general physical sustainable development, economic growth, peace, and poverty reduction, calls for sustainable girl child education. Some of the importance of educating girl child as outline by British council (2012) and National Population commission (2009) are:

- i. Girls' education is good economics. It is the best investment in a country's national development.
- ii. One extra year of schooling increases lifetime earnings by up to an estimated 10%.
- iii. Educating girls enhances growth rates and reduces social disparities.
- iv. Women with higher educational qualifications are more likely to be in formal wage employment than those with only primary schooling.
- v. Educated women are less likely to die in childbirth and more likely to have healthy and well-nourished children than their non-educated counterparts.
- vi. A child born to a literate mother is 50% more likely to survive past the age of five.

- vii. In Nigeria 66% mothers with secondary education give birth in a health facility compared to 11% with no education.
- viii. The children of educated women are more likely to go to school. Girls' education spurs exponential positive effects on social and economic development for generations to come.

Despite the aforementioned, various national and international policies aimed at increasing girl child school enrollment and reducing the gap with their male counterpart, couple with various collaborative measures adopted to increasing girl child school enrollment in Nigeria, the margin is still wide as revealed by Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey [NDHS] (2013), that 40.4% females as against 29.5% males have never attended school (NPC/RTI, 2014). In figure, over 5.5 million girls are out-of-school (UNESCO, 2014). This has a negative transitive effect on the enrollment rate of girl child in tertiary institutions.

In Northern Nigeria, all levels of education enrolled few girls compared to boys and for this reason; fewer girls participate in and complete their basic education and continuing into post basic education (British Council, 2012). Statistics shows that, in the three regions of the North, North-Central has more literate women with 45% than North-West and North-East put together with 20% each as reveal by Federal Office of Statistics (2004). Gender disparity in education in Bauchi state is wide, as about 62.3% of females have no formal education, 17.5% have some primary education while only 7.3% completed primary schools according to NDHS, (2013) in Girls Education Advocacy Research Network (GEARN, 2016). UNESCO (2012) in Mohammed, Agboola, &. Olugbenle (2016) puts the female literacy rate across the state as 35.3%, based on which the state is considered one of the educationally disadvantaged states especially with respect to girl child education according to UNICEF, (2011). Many scholars tried to look at causes or factors hindering the girls from enrolling in basic schools (both in school and out school issues), the impact of girl child education on individual and the society at large, and on poverty eradication and women empowerment, (Awan, et. al., (2011), Micheal, (2011), Andrew and Etumabo, (2016), Omoniyi, (2013), Akpakwu & Bua, (2016), etc.),

without looking at the transition of these girl child into tertiary schools. It is on these premises that this paper is anchored with the aimed to assessing the changes in girl child tertiary school enrollment before, during and after UNICEF Female Teachers Trainee Scholarship Scheme (FTTSS) in Aminu Saleh College of Education (ASCOE) Azare in order to encourage sustainable girl child tertiary school enrollment to developing a fairer, more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable state.

Research Question

What is the girl child school enrollment rate before, during and after UNICEF FTTSS in ASCOE Azare,

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed at assessing girl child tertiary school enrollment rate before, during and after UNICEF FTTSS in ASCOE Azare. The aim will be achieved through the assessment of girl child five-year school enrollment rate before, during and after UNICEF FTTSS in ASCOE Azare.

Girl Child School Enrollment in Bauchi

Development of every country lies on the educational attainment of its citizens without gender disparity; also it requires the provision of quality education that can meet the learning needs of her citizens including those of women and girls, as advance by Mohammed, et al., (2016). Large number out of tertiary school girls age are still visible hawking at check points, motor parks, gas stations, serving as food vendors in hotels, construction sites, sales girl in shops, while others serve as the lead to the aged and physically challenged seeking for alms, this has widen the gender disparity gap in in education in the state, this also support the UNICEF (2011) outburst that, Bauchi state is one of the educationally disadvantaged states with respect to girl child education. Mohammed, et al., (2016), believed poverty, early marriage and cultural bias against girls are reasons for gender disparity in education in the state. Reports of ActionAid (2012) shows poverty prevent 41% from going to school; early marriage 20%

while other factors add up. Variations based on geographical areas show lower enrollment rate in rural areas, Mohammed, et al., (2016).

Despite the intensification of national and international efforts towards ensuring education of the girl child in Nigeria, large percentages of girls in North East Nigeria in which Bauchi state is part are still without basic education. Comparing girl child school enrollment in Nigeria shows that: Two-thirds of females never attended school in North-East and North-West; this means they were never enrolled in any school compared to about one-eighth of females in South-West and South-South as reported by GEARN (2016). Adediran, (2010), believed publicizing the Girls Education Project and Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria, will improve education of girls in Northern Nigeria. Hence the need to make the importance of girl child education known to all and sundry so as to increase the desire of parents, individuals and communities towards enrolling their girls in school for sustainable gender parity, peace and poverty eradication. Findings of GEARN (2016), on the impact of various girls' education initiatives on education outcomes and a review of impact of School Based Management Committee grants on girls' enrollment, completion and performance in Bauchi state Junior Secondary reveal an observed improvement in girls' enrollment. It is important to encourage programmes that aimed at improving girl child school enrollment. These will impact positively on their transition to a higher level education for increasing gender parity for sustainable peace and poverty eradication.

Challenges of Girl Child School Enrollment

Despite national and international collaborations on ensuring education for all, providing every child with an education appears to be beyond reach, Department for International Development (DFID, 2005). This is caused by insecurity and poverty, as the girl child for long had been seen as hewers of wood and drawers of water. It is interesting to expose that many among the girls child are seen hawking in most of the check points, motor parks, gas stations, serving as food vendors in schools environment, construction sites, while others serve as the lead to the aged and physically challenged seeking for alms, see table 2. The hurdles girls need to overcome to benefit

from quality education are: cost of education, poor school environments, weak position of women in society, conflict and social exclusion, (Ibid). Syntheses of the challenges/barriers as outlined by studies of Girls Education Advocacy Research Network (GEARN, 2016) are presented on table 1.

Professor Mohammad Kirfi appeal in a keynote address at a one day state level consultative conference on enrollment drive campaign for out of school children, organized by the Bauchi State Council of Traditional Leaders, in collaboration with SUBEB and UNICEF, Bauchi Field Office as reported by (Vanguard News, 2019), that the traditional rulers should help increase the enrolment of all school aged children, particularly the girl child, just as they help addressed issues in health sector and urged them to do the same in the education sector. In a paper, presented by Professor Bala Sulaiman Dalhatu in the same conference, traced the importance of girl child education to societal development and called for automatic employment for female teachers in order to encourage their enrollment in schools. He believed social norms and cultural barrier impede the access of girl-child to education. These challenges are sustained and inherited by the girls over the years and are threatening the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals in the country. This therefore, calls for national/international collaborative strategies to reduce poverty and make education for all achievable to achieving sustainable peace and poverty reduction for attaining the vision of sustainable development goal in Nigeria.

Table 1: Barriers to Girls' Schooling from a Synthesis of the GEARN Studies

Out – of –School Issues		
Family	Aversion of Western Education	☆☆
	Fear of Exposure to Harassment, Rape	☆☆
	Poverty, Inability to Finance School Cost	☆☆☆☆☆
	No Interest in Girls' Education, Negative Gender Attitudes Stereotypes	☆☆☆☆

	Child Labour, Hawking	★★
	Societal Stigma for resisting Early Marriage	★★
	Early Marriage	★★★
	Courtship practices	★
	Ignorance of Free Education Policy	★
	Aversion to Marriage with Educated Women	★
	Lack of Role Models	★
	Absence of girls' Education Initiatives	★
Girls	Low Self-concept: Discouraging Attitudes About Girls' Competence	★
	Lack of Autonomy	★
	Fear of Divorce	★
	Early pregnancy	★
In-School Issues		
Location	Distance; Absence of Secondary School in the community	★★
	Conflict situation: Displacement, Migration	★
Teacher	Lack of Female Teachers	★★
	Poor Quality of Teachers/Teaching	★
	Teachers' Negative Attitudes	★
	Teachers' Prolonged Strike Actions	★
Physical Infrastructure	Lack of Toilets for Female	★
	Poor Facilities, Overcrowding in Classrooms	★★★
Poor Funding	Poor Funding	★★

How Frequently Cited: ★ Occasionally; ★★ Sometimes; ★★★ Frequently; ★★★★★ Usually; ★★★★★★ Every time

Source: Assessing Girls' Education in Northern Nigeria, (2016).
A Synthesis of GEARN Studies from Six States.

Need to Promote Girl Child Education

Gap in literacy rate is reflected in enrollment and completion of girl's basic education. This affects their transition to secondary and tertiary schools and is strengthened by poverty, gender norms and traditional practices, early

marriage, child labour, child trafficking, prostitution, school girl child adoption by Boko Haram (insecurity), and their place in the society. UNESCO, (2014) believed if recent trends continue, i.e. gender disparities in education, children from the poorest households are much less likely to ever enroll in school. Therefore, the boys will achieve universal primary education completion in 2021, but the poorest girls will not catch up until 2086'. UNESCO (2014) went further to say that, despite illiteracy causes violence, poverty, disease, child labour, child trafficking, prostitution, and indiscipline, women account for almost two-thirds of the world's 774 million illiterate adults and there has been no change in reducing this share since 1990. Education can therefore be described as a vital transformational and formidable instrument for the socio-economic empowerment of women and as a result, and a means for poverty reduction among women in Nigeria, (Akpakwu & Bua, 2016).

DFID, (2005), said "women are at the heart of most societies. Regardless of whether they are working or not, mothers are very influential people in children's lives and that educating girls is one of the most important investments that any country can make in its own future". Mahuta (2010), said education not only provides women with the necessary skills to improve their livelihood, but also empowers women to take their right places in the development process of the society. Helping communities to be healthier, wealthier and safer can only be achieved through educating girls, which will help reduce school dropout, increase enrollment rate and also increase transition to higher level educations. Although some efforts have been made to improve girl-child education in Nigeria, Andrew and Etumabo, (2016), believed much still needs to be done if women must realize their potential and fully contribute to the political, socio-economic and technological transformation of the country.

A lot of scholars have advocated education for all, most especially the girl child as education reduces illiteracy which is one of the strongest predictors of poverty as believed by Andrew and Etumabo, (2016). To Kulild, (2014), education that targets marginalized and poor populations will bring change to many of the systemic factors that have contributed to the delay in poor communities' development. He went further to point out

links of education to nutrition and food insecurity and how education can combat the underlying structures of poverty.

Majority of women in Nigeria are not empowered due to limited educational opportunities which hampered their intellectual capacity to seek for. This constitutes reason for women's poverty, marginalization and discrimination in the country. Okernmor, Ndit and Filshak, (2012), said girl-child education is a catch-all term for a complexity of issues and debates surrounding education (primary education, secondary education, tertiary education and health education for females). Girl-child education also includes areas of gender equality, access to education and its connection to the alleviation of poverty, good governance, which are major ingredients in averting crime against women. All the aforementioned, explains the need to promote girl child education through increase enrollment rate in Nigeria.

Role of Women Education in Peace and Poverty Eradication

The biggest challenge in attaining sustainable peace and poverty eradication is women educational backwardness in sub-Saharan Africa. Pauline Rose (director of UNESCO's Education for All Global Monitoring Report) as reported by Reuters, (2013) believes "Education help girls and young women defy social limits on what they can or cannot do and believed also that educating girls and young women is a necessary investment for a peaceful and poverty-free world as education improves literacy among girls and young women with huge financial benefits". Achieving national and international peace and the defeat of poverty has become the main goal of nations and international organisation over the years. The essential prerequisite for these is total girl child education. Awan, Malik, Sarwar, and Waqas, (2011) believed education and poverty are inversely related, this has a direct bearing on sustainable peace in any nation. Explaining further, they said, the higher the population's level of education, the lesser will be the number of poor persons as education imparts knowledge and skills which is supportive in higher wages.

Education has been described by Micheal, (2011) as the most important aspect of human development. It is perhaps the most important tool for human development and the eradication of poverty and a means by which successive generations develop the values, knowledge and skills for their

personal health and safety and for future political, economic, social and cultural development, (Yazdani, 2017). It is the bases to a successful living, especially girl-child education and the effect of education on poverty reduction is seen in increase hygiene, earnings/income or wages, the raising the living standard. This means the fall in human poverty which is correlated to peace. Andrew and Etumabo, (2016) believed education is key to transforming girl child life and making her a responsible member of society. They went further to say, without education, girls are denied the opportunity to develop their full potentials and play productive role in nation building, Ozturk, (2011), believed no country has achieved constant economic development without considerable investment in education and human capital. Educating girls and women is probably the single most effective investment a developing country like Nigeria can make, whether or not women work outside the home. It creates a multitude of positive remunerations for families including better family health and nutrition, improved birth spacing, lower infant and child mortality, and enhanced educational attainment of children (Omoniyi, 2013). Julius and Bawane, (2011) believed, one notable role of educational attainment in poverty reduction, is the direct linear relationship between education and earnings and that, better-educated individuals earn considerably more than the less-educated.

Andrew and Etumabo, (2016) believed 'Education is the main single factor associated with the probability of being poor, majority of those who are illiterate are poor. Individuals who are illiterate and poor are susceptible to violence, thereby threatening national peace and security. Thus, promotion of education by improving educational enrollment among girl child is central in addressing problems of moderate and extreme poverty to achieving sustainable peace for development. Despite the perception of Obinaju, (2014) on education as being inalienable right of all irrespective of the person's circumstance, a lot of girls in North East lack education and is a direct confirmation that the girl are or would be poor. This will invariably threaten sustainable peace and poverty eradication. Sustainable peace and poverty reduction relies on human capacity and capital development which can be achieved through education, reason Omoniyi, (2013) believed education fosters self-understanding, improves quality of lives and raises people's productivity and creativity, thus promoting

entrepreneurship and technological advances. This has a positive impact on poverty eradication with a direct bearing on peace. He also believed that education plays very crucial roles in securing economic and social progress, thus, improving income distribution which may consequently salvage the people from poverty. This was also confirmed by Andrew and Etumabo, (2016) when they said, education helps reduce poverty by increasing the productivity of the poor, by equipping people with the skills they need to participate fully in economy and society, lower fertility, improved health care of children, and greater participation of women in the labour market. No wonder Kulild, (2014), calls for “a renewed global effort to achieve good quality, relevant education for all to address educations’ role in fighting poverty, creating jobs, foster business development, improve health and nutrition, and promote gender equality, peace and democracy”. Akpakwu & Bua, (2016) concludes that the impact of any anti-poverty measures will depend on the extent to which government strategies are gender-oriented so that they target the reproduction activities of women.

Methodology

Data

The study relied on secondary data collected from the academic office of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare. This school was selected for the study basically because: it’s the schools that UNICEF sponsored over 1000 girls through the Female Teachers Trainee Scholarship Scheme (FTTSS). The programme is a core component of the Girls’ Education Project which aim at promoting girl child education, and the low entry requirement of the school when compare to the university. The enrollment data used were five years girl child school enrollment before, during and after UNICEF FTTSS intervention in girl education in Bauchi State. Data were analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings are presented by use of tables and figures.

The Study Area

ASCOE Azare is Bauchi state owned college of education established as an Advanced Teachers' College in 1977. It is located in Azare town, seat of

Katagun local government area of Bauchi state. Azare town is the second largest town in Bauchi State after the state Capital. It is located at the center of the northernmost part of the State, and situated at 11°38'00"North, 10°11'28" East (Google Earth, 2015) in Abubakar, Lawal, Hassan, Jagaba, (2016); and covers an area of 1,436km². It is bordered by Itas Gadau and Gamawa LGA's in the North, East, Danbam LGA, West by Jama'are and to the south by Misau-Shira and Giade LGA, see figure 1.

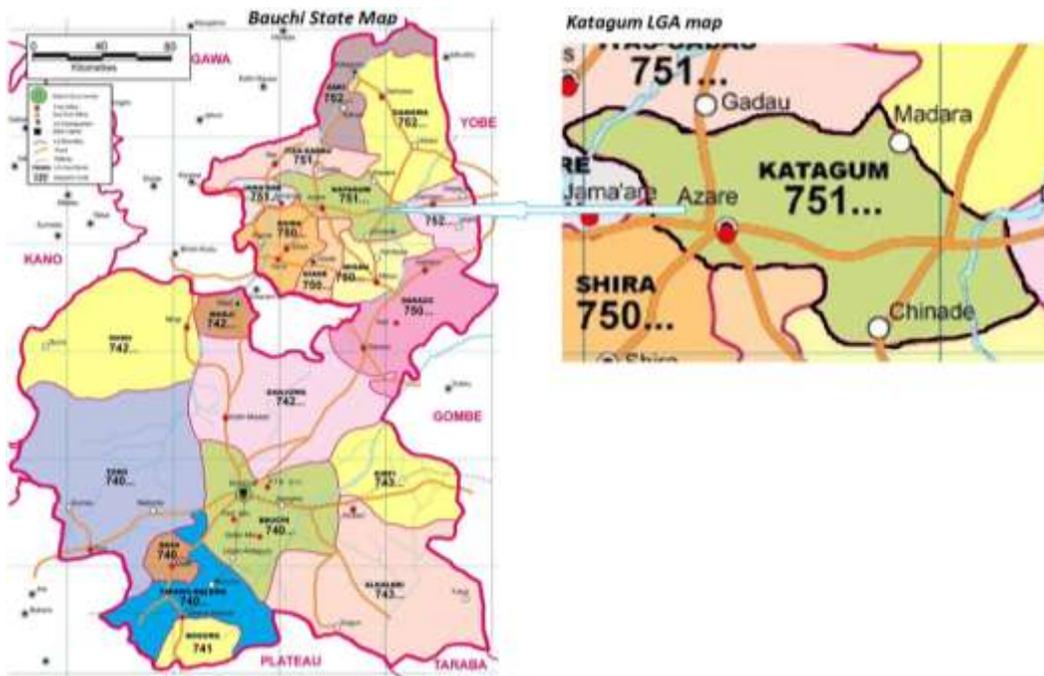


Figure 1: Azare, Katagum LGA in Bauchi

Source: Adopted from Abubakar, et al., (2016);

Discussion of Findings

Table 2 present data on girl child school enrollment in ASCOE Azare. The data presented are five (5) years sessional school enrollment rate before, during and after FTTSS in the College. The intervention was through payment of school fees, accommodations and payment of monthly stipends to the benefitting girls in order to encourage enrollment and the completion of their studies. The intervention programmes lasted for five years (2010-2015)

Table 2: Girls' Child School Enrollment Before, During and After UNICEF Intervention

Girls' Child School Enrollment Before UNICEF Intervention		
Session	Frequency	Percentage (%)
2004/2005	778	14.2
2005/2006	748	13.7
2006/2007	1,031	18.9
2007/2008	1,168	21.7
2008/2009	1,722	31.5
Total	5,468	100
Girls' Child School Enrollment During UNICEF Intervention		
2009/2010	1640	15.5
2010/2011	2082	19.5
2011/2012	1729	16.2
2012/2013	2269	21.3
2013/2014	2937	27.5
Total	10,651	100
Girls' Child School Enrollment After UNICEF Intervention		
2014/2015	132	5.6
2015/2016	654	27.8
2016/2017	687	29.3
2017/2018	444	18.9
2018/2019	432	18.4
Total	2,349	100

Source: Academic Office ASCOE Azare, 2020.

Five years before the UNICEF FTTSS, the school recorded a little but progressive increased in the enrollment rates with the highest enrollment rate in 2008/2009 session with 1.722 girls representing 31.5% of the total five years population while, the minimum girl child enrollment before UNICEF FTTSS was experience in 2004/2005 session given as 778, representing 14.2%. A short fall of less than 1% was recorded between 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 as presented on figure 2: Total enrollment rate within the five years period before UNICEF FTTSS was **5,468** girls.

During UNICEF FTTSS, a progressive increase in girl child tertiary school enrollment was recorded but with a short fall in 2011/2012 session which recorded 3.3% decrease in the enrollment rate of 2010/2011 session from 2082 down to 1729 girls. The highest enrollment was recorded in 2013/2014 session with 2937 girls representing 27.5% of the total five years during the UNICEF FTTSS while the least enrollment session was in 2009/2010 which happens to be the beginning of the scheme with 1640 girls. The total increase in girl child tertiary school enrollment during UNICEF FTTSS five years period is more than 98% compared to enrollment rate before the FTTSS period, i.e. (from 5,468 to 10,651), see figure 2. After the UNICEF FTTSS intervention, a regression in girl child school enrollment was experienced in 2014/2015 which recorded the worse enrollment rate with only 132 female students showing a decrease of 95.7% of the total enrollment of 2013/2014 session. The highest enrollment after the UNICEF FTTSS was in 2016/2017 session with 687 girls enrolled, which is less than half the enrollment rate of each year during the intervention period. Total enrollment five years after intervention period was 2349, a decrease of 82% of the enrollment rate during intervention period. The enrollment of girls in the school is still decreasing till date, see figure 2.

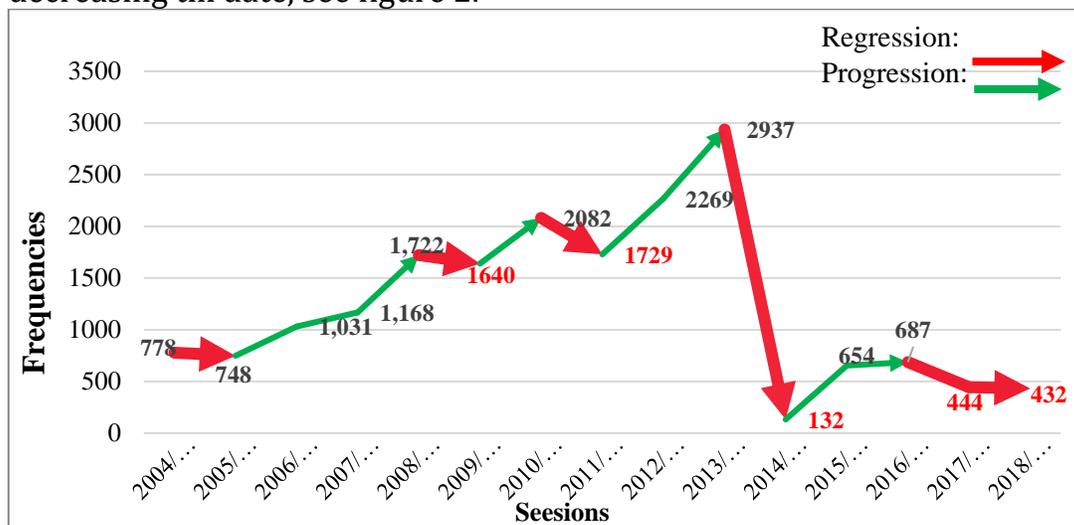


Figure 2: Girl Child School Enrollment Before, During and After UNICEF FTTSS

CONCLUSION

Education has widely been acknowledged as the main route out of poverty. Therefore, for peace and poverty eradication, an avalanche of national and

international order and efforts towards ensuring women enrollment in schools and completion are achieved through continuous funding should be sustained. Achieving sustainable women education, sustainable peace will be achieved and much poverty stricken individual will be eluded. If the inherent importance of education in all facets of life is not widely acknowledged, the margin of educational inequality will continue to widen and poverty and insecurity will be an inherited status in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Achieving gender parity and poverty eradication goals of sustainable development by the year 2030, calls for more national and international collaboration aimed at increasing girl child enrollment particularly by offering free and compulsory tertiary girl education,
2. There is the need to build on existing initiatives through adequate funding and expansion of initiatives for sustainable and maximum impact.
3. Discourage every activity that will deter girls from schools during school hours
4. There is the need for widespread advocacy and sensitization on the importance of girl child education to support not only primary school attendance but to proceed to secondary and tertiary schools.
5. Girls and women who complete their tertiary education should be given automatic employment to lure more in enrolling in schools,
6. Government should ensure the implementation of compulsory and free basic education in the state. This would boost girls' enrollment rates in schools.

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