

TITLE PAGE

**USMANU DANFODIYO UNIVERSITY, SOKOTO
(POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL)**

**POLICY AND SITUATION ANALYSIS OF WOMEN
CONTINUING EDUCATION IN SOKOTO STATE. A STUDY
OF WOMEN CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION**

BY

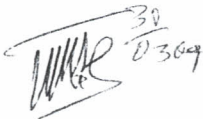
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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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AWARD OF DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN
ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING**

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CERTIFICATION

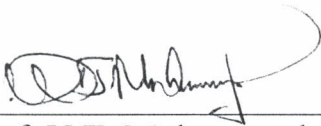
This dissertation by Ummu-Kaltumi Yakubu (02211408010) has met the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Education (Educational Administration and Planning) of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto and is approved for its contribution to knowledge.



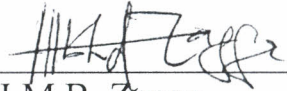
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the entire family of Mallam Yakubu Abubakar, my husband, Prince Aminu Adamu and my daughter, Princess Fauziyya Adamu.

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ABSTRACT

The motivation for this study was informed by the seeming low enrolment level of the females in schools in Sokoto state. To identify the reasons why they withdrew from schools and the motivating factor for their re-joining schools after a long break. The sample consisted of 300 students who were all females in categories of single, married, divorced and widows, selected randomly from Women Centre for Continuing Education Sokoto. Fifty other respondents that consisted of teachers of the school, civil servants, NGO's and self employed people. A 24 item self designed questionnaire was administered to the respondents. The study found out that the establishment of the Women Centre for Continuing Education, and the conducive learning environment in the school helped motivate the re-joining of the school by the dropouts. Also that the students both single, married, divorced and widowed have almost the same views of rejoining the school. It was recommended that more of these schools should be established in all the local governments in the state. Also education should be made totally free for women, and more enlightenment campaigns on laws prohibiting withdrawal of females from school should be carried out by the government.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The age long adage says; If you educate a woman you educate a nation, is a popular saying. With this it is glaring that for women to be able to take part in nation building, they have to attain a level of education. In Nigeria there is a national gender disparity in education enrolment, retention and completion against girls. In addition there are regional variations in education with girls and women from Northern Nigeria and rural communities generally at a disadvantage. Building on existing child school initiative which is supported by UNICEF, Nigeria has developed the Strategy for the Acceleration of Girls Education in Nigeria (SAGEN) and now being reinforced by the new Girls Education Project (GEP). This is a substantial joint undertaking by the Federal Government of Nigeria, United Kingdom department for International Development (DFID), all aimed at boosting girls schooling in Northern Nigeria and accelerate progress towards the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), especially with respect to gender equity.

The major objectives of the Girl Education Project (GEP) include;

- raising national awareness on girl child education and increasing political and financial commitment through advocacy and sensitization of policy makers and parents;
- collaborating with government and other stakeholders in reviewing existing curricula and teaching materials for gender sensitivity;
- promoting the employment of more female teachers in the rural areas, where they are most needed to serve as role models and assist in the mentoring of girls;
- monitoring and evaluating of girls education programmes, mobilizing and strengthening the inspectorates role in this process;
- promoting synergy between girls education and poverty alleviation programmes; and
- improving service delivery with all stakeholders in girls school and improving facilities and instructional materials for the promotion of quality education.

In pursuance of these objectives, advocacy visits were extended to six Northern states of Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto states. A number of programmes and projects have been undertaken by the federal ministry of education to strengthen the GED so as to ensure its sustainability. Some of them include: The restructuring of the federal inspectorate services through quality control, capacity building efforts in collaboration with UNESCO, World Bank, DFID, etc to address the falling standard in teaching and low learning achievement among pupils. This is designed to enhance teachers and pedagogical skill.

Sokoto State in its own bid to reduce illiteracy amongst women established a school i.e. Women Centre for Continuing Education which was only for females who could either not complete their education or had no opportunity to attend at all. This school admits single, married, divorced and widows into its academic programme. Though we have two other institutions for women, but the women centre for continuing education is more unique because it is comprehensive in academic work in combination with the vocational centre where the women learn trades like tailoring, knitting, cookery,

soap and pomade making etc, while the other two are only vocational in nature.

The school also allows the students to attend with their children. These are opportunities which years back women had not got, to rejoin formal school at the time appropriate and conducive to them. Most of the married women when interviewed said they were in the school with the permission and consent of their husbands. In Sokoto the much vaunted tradocultural and religious factors, hitherto fingered as the main culprits have teamed with dwindling economic fortunes of most families to further worsen the situation of poor enrollment of women in schools.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This research intends to find out government policy on women education and actual situation on the ground with particular reference to this centre, (women centre for continuing education). In the 1980's the state government, in pandering to the clamour from a section of the society established more single sex schools. This programme virtually ended co educational institutions in the state. In taking that decision, government was swayed by the argument that co educational

institutions negate certain Islamic injunctions, which discouraged mixing of both sexes in the same enclosures. It was hoped that this would encourage parents to release their daughters to school.

Although there has been an increase in students enrolment, comparatively speaking, the figures represent a decline in the number of girls in school. This means there is a more fundamental problem facing women education than government anticipated, since the issue has become even more disturbing, considering the fact that most women do not participate in any visible economic production, it has become necessary to find workable ways round the problem

1.3 Research Questions

1. What was the motivation for the establishment of women centre for continuing education by Sokoto state government?
2. What are the possible reasons for the new enthusiasm on the part of women, single, married, divorced and widows for education?
3. Could there be different views among single women, married, divorced and widows for re-joining formal education after years of break?

4. What are the possible prospects of the centre for boosting women education in Sokoto state and realization of gender parity in education?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the motivation for the establishment of women centre for continuing education by Sokoto State Government
2. To find out the possible reason for the new enthusiasm on the part of women, single, married, divorced and widows for rejoining formal education after many years of break.
3. To find out whether there could be different views among the single women, married, divorced and widow for rejoining formal education after years of break.
4. To find out possible prospects of the centre for boosting women education in Sokoto State with a view to realizing gender parity in education.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Considering their immense population, women should ordinarily be expected to play a pivotal role in national development. Unfortunately, age long traditions have continued to put them down

making it impossible to realize their potentials and more often than not, dependent on men. A society where male outnumber female, where until very recent times the birth of a daughter could determine the continued stay of a wife in her husband's house, little has been done in the way of making women realize their potentials. In this respect one obvious significance of the study is its contributory role towards effecting a change of societal attitude with regard to female education. Parents, husbands and women, the victims of this societal attitude would benefit immensely from the findings of the study. The society will see the importance of female education and increase the rate of enrolling their daughters in schools and also allow them to complete their education without withdrawing them from schools

A second significance is its potential to effect outright abrogation or review of certain wrong headed educational policies which in the estimation of educational planners and administrators, are necessary but which in practice have proved to be counter productive. The policy makers and stakeholders will know how to implement educational policies better for them to be effective.

Another significance of the study is to make women realize and take up their role in the nation building. In this modernized society women have roles to play at home, in the society and also in government. Hence we have the ministry of women affairs established by the government both at the federal and state levels, without education women cannot take up this role.

Another significance is for women to put heads together with their husbands and contribute to the economy of the family. Gone are the days when the man was the only breadwinner of the family. It is now time for women to contribute financially to the family account and upkeep.

1.6 Scope and Delimitations

The study covers the students of women centre for continuing education and their teachers. The study was limited to the reasons for the withdrawal of girls from school and the motivating factors that made the students to rejoin the school after the long break.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature. Specifically the review highlighted the following issues in relation to the education of women:

- a. Brief history of the Women Centre for Continuing Education
- b. Concept of education
- c. Formal and informal education
- d. Critical challenges facing women education
- e. Policy and educational policy in Nigeria with special focus On Sokoto state.
- f. Summary and uniqueness of the study.

We start by giving a brief history of the school in focus (women centre for continuing education).

2.2 Brief History of the Women Centre for Continuing Education

According to records supplied by the principal, the school was established on 8th September 1997 with a principal and 10 members of staff. The subjects started with were: mathematics, English, Arabic,

integrated science Hausa, Home economics, Islamic religious studies, sewing and knitting. The school started with 103 students. The first assembly with students was held on Monday 22nd September 1997. The assembly was conducted twice a week i.e. Mondays and Wednesdays. Presently the school has a staff strength of 50 male and female staff, with students population of over 1000. The school comprises of an adult education class, primary 4 and 6, junior and senior secondary schools. They take part in NECO and WAEC examinations. The first set graduands from the school in 2001 passed out with good results. Students who graduated from the school are now in institutions of higher learning like the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto (UDUS). Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto (SSCOE) and Sokoto State Polytechnic..

The school also operates various clubs and societies like the young farmers club, debating club, science club, home makers club, press club and red cross society with each having a patron. In addition to the academic activities, the school has a vocational class where students are taught various skills like sewing, knitting, cookery, soap and pomade making to enable students to be self reliant. Students in

this class graduate after a year of study and another set is admitted into the same programme. The objectives of the women centre for continuing education include the following:

- to provide educational opportunities for those women who dropped out of school prematurely and who now want to rejoin formal school system to further their education;
- to provide various forms of trade like tailoring, knitting, weaving, cookery etc for women who are interested in such vocations with a view to increase their income generation capacities;
- to attract widows and divorces who want to enroll into formal school system to further their education pending the time they get suitors for marriage; and
- to empower women for participation into various activities in government and private sector in line with the achievement of millennium development goals

Education is a powerful tool or instrument for national, socio economic development. The national policy on education (1977 revised (1981) points out categorically that education is a dynamic

instrument par excellence for effecting social change and national development. It is generally accepted that education is not only an instrument for national development, but it is also the gate way to knowledge and development both for individual and society. Girls and women education is facing a great and sustained inequality, disadvantages and oppression. The existence of gender inequality is brazenly unequivocal according to (Osinula, (1996) as cited by Mahuta, (2001).

Throughout the world, females are the victims of educational inequalities. This is not an isolated phenomenon but directly one that reflects the monopoly or semi monopoly, which men enjoy in the higher levels of the economy and the polity. It is common in Africa for sons to receive education before daughters and for the latter to catch up only when schools become universal for boys. Even then considerable inequalities of enrolment are common at the post primary level according, to Blake and Cooksey (1981) and Mahuta, (2001).

2.3 Concept of Education

Education means different things to different people. Swift (1969:7) says education takes place in a society due to three incontrovertible facts about the human race: firstly, everything about societal values are learned and inherited, secondly, the human infant accepts without question all experiences surrounding him; and thirdly, from infancy and for a long period to come, the child is totally dependent on other people. Following from this and the fact that education in its broadest sense is the process which links the world basic facts enumerated above. Swift (1969) defines education as “the way the individuals acquire the many physical, moral and social capacities demanded of them by the group into which they are born and within which they must function”

Castle(1970) and to some extent, Dore(1970) education as a systematic socialization of the younger generation in which the latter learn religious and moral values, feeling of nationality and collective opinions of all kinds. Later Fafunwa (1974) defined education as “The aggregate of all processes by which a child or young adult develops the activities, attitude and other forms of behaviour which are of position values in the society in which he lives” Gender equity in

education was one of the main goals targeted by Nigeria since the 1990 world conference on Education for all (EFA), in Jomtien, Thailand, which commitment has been renewed in several international fora, including the United Nations Decade for Girls Education Initiatives (UNICEF:2002).

The attempts at equalizing or liberalizing access to education flows directly from the realization of those women, especially in the developing countries have restricted access to education (Nyerere:1967 and Peil:1979). For instance of the estimated 60 percent Nigerian children of school going age outside schools, more than two thirds are girls. In a highly traditional society such as Sokoto, the problem is compounded by the prevalence of patriarchal values, which mould the power and decision making process in favour of men, (Dukku, 1997:17)

2.4 Formal and Informal Education

Education, especially the informal type, is a life long affair. Melimewisky (1939) says of this type of education: "Taking education in its widest sense, we can see readily that it is a process which lasts throughout life; every new status which an individual

acquires, in every new condition of life, such as marriage parenthood, maturity”

2.5 Critical Challenges Facing Women Education

In 1987, the national council on education adopted the national women education programme with the following objectives:

- a. provide more education opportunities for girls from primary to tertiary levels;
- b. create awareness in all citizens of the fact that equal educational opportunities exist irrespective of gender, age, locality, creed or status, and that such opportunities should be made available to all;
- c. re-orientate the attitude of all females towards education, irrespective of their age;
- d. provide functional education for girls and women, to awake the consciousness of all women;
- e. educate parents and the general public so as to bring about a change in attitude toward the new women’s education programme; and

- f. promote the education of girls and women in the fields of science, technology and mathematics.

Basically the programme established two federal government secondary schools in each state of the federation, one exclusively for girls and the other for both boys and girls. Concessions have also been accorded in order to increase women's participation in the country's educational process. These notably include free education, establishment of special schools for girls and lower cut off points for admission into secondary schools. As a result, an increase in the enrolment of girls in secondary schools has been observed 42.2% in 1987 and 67% in 1993.

The programme also organized campaigns presenting the advantages of women's education and the effects of early marriage and school drop outs. At the state and local government levels the campaigns have tried to dislodge the belief that education was irrelevant to women. They are aimed at parents, the general public and women in particular. Hence this has gingered more women to enroll in the women centre for continuing education to improve their status quo.

In spite of global efforts to bridge the gender gap in education, such as awareness campaigns on the need for women education, UNICEF's provision on the need to improve the education of the girl child etc. there is very little to show that much has been achieved (Simmons:1973). In fact, the statistics consistently released by UNESCO have continued to show a frightening increase in the number of illiterate women worldwide. From a global rate of 58% in 1970 and 63% in 1980, the UNESCO, cited by Dukku (1997) reported that between 1960 and 1985, the number of illiterate women grew by 86%. Of a global total of 154 million, for the African continent, there was an almost 50 percent increase in the number of illiterate persons (from 68 million to 98 million). For the 25 years from 1960 to 1985, more than two thirds of these are females the 2001 human index report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (cited by Coobs:1985 and 1987) fingers dwindling economic fortunes, general mismanagement by governments and inconsistent official government policies as factors responsible for this situation.

The natural question that readily comes to mind is; what has been responsible for this state of education? Many factors account for

this imbalance, the most important one being parents attitude towards the education of girls and the sex stereotyping of girls in society. Though Islam, the predominant religion in Sokoto state favours and encourages education among males and females, it appears that the society has found a convenient way out by attempting to shut the door of education against women. On the whole, there is a general disdain for western education in the state, (Abdulrahman, 1997).

According to the World Bank Report(1991-1993)debilitating poverty and dwindling means of income by most parents is not helping matters rather than send their daughters to school, most poor parents would rather turn the blind eye or even positively encourage their daughters to take to hawking as a means of augmenting the income of the family. Another angle to the issue of poverty is that unwilling parents would quickly point to the growing army of unemployed graduates as an excuse to keep females out of school.. Despite the huge financial resources spent on education by the state government, the truth of the matter is that there are several other hidden, yet prohibitive costs of schooling. Abdulrahman (1997) lists some of these hidden costs to include; cost of uniforms, examination,

fees, cost of other materials either not supplied by, or in addition to what government supplied and the cost on parents of supporting their wards while schooling.

As a result of increasing government commitment, greater awareness has been created nationwide on girls education especially with the launch and ledge by the federal ministry of education to mainstream girls education into the EFA plan. Some states in Northern Nigeria have already promulgated edicts to support the promotion of education. For example Kano state has prohibited the collection of all forms of fees in all girls secondary schools, Similarly Gombe state promulgated an edict against withdrawal of girls from schools, while Niger, Bauch, and Yobe states have removed financial disincentives affecting girls enrolment in secondary schools. Those out as a result of early marriage and or teenage pregnancy are encouraged to return to school as the case with the women centre for continuing education in Sokoto state.

The efforts of federal government of Nigeria and UNICEF in promoting the African Girls Education Initiative (AGEI) (2002-2004), which was funded by the Norwegian government recorded remarkable

progress in terms of enrolment and retention. The AGEI evaluation report revealed a 28% increase in girls education retention (GER) and 8% drop out rate for Girls in the 22 pilot primary schools supported by the programme. The gender gap in states that benefited from the AGEI reduced appreciably for education of school age children not enrolled in schools.

It is encouraging however to see that parents in some parts of the country, especially in the North are willing to let their daughters participate in other forms of education which are of shorter duration, close to their area of residence and have flexible scheduling. These learning centres are perceived to be more compatible with their customs and more likely to give them functional skills and assuring them of future employment. For similar reasons, the non formal approach to education, which embraces Islamic education tend to enjoy wide appeal in the northern part of the country.

Since 1997, UNICEF has been working with the Federal Government of Nigeria through the national mass literacy commission and other agencies to provide non formal education programmes such as the non formal girls education, non formal Qur'anic education and

non formal out of school education. These three specifically target out of school children, adolescents and youths between the ages of 8 and 18 who are unable to complete education, or who have never been to school. The non formal Qur'anic education programme has, in some states in the north, such as Bauchi, Borno and Kano integrated four core subject (mathematics, English language, Basic science and social studies) into the conventional Qur'anic education curriculum. The universal basic education (UBE) also makes provision for the integration of non formal education, including Qur'anic education, in order to ensure that the need of the disadvantaged and marginalized children are equally addressed.

2.6 Policy and Educational Policy in Nigeria with Special Focus on Sokoto State

Policies are decisions of people in authority, which express organizational intentions for achieving the purposes of the organization. In education, they represent government's thinking as to direction along which the affairs of the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education should be conducted. They are practical guides to ministry and school officials on school matters. According to Ocho (2003).

Policies perform two major functions

- to point to the direction of future development
- to correct defects detected in the operation of the system

Advantages of policy development are:

1. policies provide a sense of security to staff in that the intention of the school board or education authority regarding personnel matters is on record. They also provide a sense of direction to the stakeholders and the general public by making known to all the principles guiding education decisions, procedures and rules;
2. policies are conducive to operational stability. A change of the administrator or board members does not mean a change in policy. It encourages productivity and creativity of staff in the organization;
3. policies assure fair treatment to all personnel and other stakeholders in education such as students and parents. That is the reason why we have parents teachers association in the

various schools where they interact and see the way forward in schools;

4. policies facilitate quicker decision making, thereby saving time, money and effort of all concerned because they provide criteria for weighing solution to problems. This involves the overall running of the school system for example the flexibility in the women centre for continuing education is a privilege which is not given to any other secondary school in Sokoto state. This is to encourage and motivate the women to come and re-join the formal school system;
5. policies minimize inconsistencies in decisions by different administrative officials on similar problems because all are guided by the same policies, procedures and rules; and
6. they foster actions along lines considered appropriate for the attainment of organizational objectives. In Sokoto state to encourage high enrolment level at the women centre, the government has a vocational centre where the women learn various skills like sewing, knitting, cookery, soap and

pomade making etc. This will not only make the women literate in theory but also empowers them to be self reliant even after their secondary school as they can produce and sell to boost their family economy, (Ocho :2003 and Ozigi and Ocho:1981).

The education law of a state and the regulations made under it governs the administration of education in the state. The law determines, the functions of the local governments in the conduct of education. The state ministry of education may delegate to local governments certain functions of administering nursery, primary and adult education institutions located in their respective areas. The local government may determine policies guiding its delegated powers. However, the state government is responsible for all educational policies governing the quality in education, adequacy of staff and equipment, staff discipline, the curriculum, evaluation of learning, financial administration and in general ensuring that the national objectives of education are pursued. The local government may be charged with responsibility for equipment and maintenance of school buildings, provision of such non academic staff of primary schools

such as cleaners, security and health officials. In 1985, Fafunwa had this to say about Nigerian education :

“Education is the largest industry in Nigeria. It has more than 19 million pupils and students and over 400,000 professional/academic and non academic staff; and with an educational expenditure of over 5 billion Naira per year. All the figures quoted above have now been exceeded because of galloping growth in school enrolment and expenditure. According to the annual abstract of statistics, 1995 edition, recurrent and capital expenditure in Education in 1994 was 9.435 billion Naira”.

To ensure that educational policies are implemented and that educational objectives are achieved, in the vast and intimidating industry, the federal and state governments established a number of parastatals and institutions charged with responsibility for various levels and types of educational institutions. In this way, government policies, intentions and purposes reach down to all pupils, students and adults in the educational system. In Sokoto state we have the teachers service board, in charge of recruitment of staff in schools

which is under the supervision of the state ministry of education, (Ocho: 2003).

2.7 Summary and Uniqueness of the Study

Education has an important role to play in the progress of any nation that aspires toward development (Blang:1973 and Cohn:1979). To that extent, the basic education requirement for a citizen cannot be compromised, while some improvements in education were witnessed over the years. The economic problems of the nation and the implementation of certain economic policies such as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) seem to have put a halt to these achievements. There is therefore, the need to improve on school enrolment and literacy in the country which at present displays large regional and gender differentials. The cost of turning things around certainly cannot be borne by governments at the three levels alone, either at present or the foreseeable future. But even as things stand today, it is expected that all must be done to improve enrolment of children, especially the girl child in school. According to Bamisaiye(1990) One way of doing this is to employ the services of traditional and community rulers who command respect to improve

enrolment. The present constitutional requirement on education is not forceful enough. For instance, the constitution merely says: ‘Government policy shall be towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels.’ Here, there are no safeguards in ensuring continuity in whatever improvement is achieved from one period to another. Increased enrolment will further reduce instances of child labour and child trafficking. On a final note, the nations educational programme should be practical oriented it has to be conceded that this precisely is what the 6-3-3-4 was meant to achieve but the effect in that respect is yet to be seen.

From the review of related literature, it is quite clear that gender inequality is very evident amongst females. Throughout the world, females are victims of educational inequalities. In Sokoto state withdrawal of females from school could be linked to the fact that parents feel that their daughters are a source of wealth to them, this they achieve by withdrawing them from school to give them out to wealthy suitors who are from the ruling class, as the suitors entice them with material wealth and cut short the education of their daughters even against the wish of the girls. The women centre for

continuing education has served the purpose of motivating these women after being divorced or widowed to re-join formal education with its level of flexibility. The school admits women irrespective of their ages, and material status. One other unique factor of the school is that the women are allowed to attend with their children who are not of school going ages. They also learn vocational trades like sewing, knitting, cookery etc. Amongst the objectives of the national women education programme is to: create awareness in all citizens of the fact that equal education opportunities exist irrespective of gender, age, locality, creed or status, and that such opportunities should be made available to all. Previous efforts on gender inequality focused attention on providing access to girls and other incentives with a view to motivate them and to raise enrolment. This has been exemplified by federal government provision of a federal unity school exclusive for girls in each state of the federation in addition to a mixed school in each state. At state levels, various edicts and laws were promulgated prohibiting withdrawal of girls from school, early marriages and all of forms child abuse like street hawking and child labour. Little attention was given to women school dropout, married women who withdrew prematurely, single women, divorcees and widowed. Here

lies the uniqueness of this study by investigating the possibilities and strategies aimed at boosting women rather than 'girls' education. Hitherto, this category of women had almost lost hope of rejoining formal school system after they have married and established their own families. This new impetus and effort has the potential of opening new avenue for women to rejoin formal school system at their own convenience to realize life dreams.

To the best of the knowledge of the researcher, no efforts in this direction has been researched to in this part of the country. If at all, researches have been conducted on women inequality of educational opportunity, it has not been done in the centre where this work was done. The study is therefore unique in its nature and form in Sokoto state if not in Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents methodology of the research. In this regard, the research design, population of the study, samples and sampling techniques, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the instruments, method of data collection and analysis are discussed.

3.2 Research Design

The study was a descriptive survey type of design. This is because the subjects of study were required to respond through questionnaires. The survey technique was preferred because the data required was essentially based on the opinion of the respondents. This research design is concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions, prevailing circumstance beliefs attitudes or on going process. (in case of policies) this design gives chances of drawing respondents as direct participants in the process of data collection.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprises of 1,000 students of the women centre for continuing education. This includes female students

undergoing secondary and primary education; vocational and adult education section. The majority of the population is made up of married women whose education was interrupted because they were withdrawn from conventional schooling to be married out. Among the population are some women with broken marriages and who now consider returning to school as the best way to put their lives back on track. The stakeholders are also included in the study. They are made up of 55 teachers of W.C.C.E 35 members of NGO (STCI) 200 staff of teachers service board..

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The survey involved 300 respondents who are students of the women centre for continuing education out of the overall school population of 1000. Three main categories of respondents were chosen for the study. These are married, divorced and unmarried. They were randomly sampled since it was the intention of the study to identify the cause or causes of the high illiteracy rate in female education in the state.

For the stakeholders whose opinions were sought, it is interesting to note that 30 of the 50 respondents were females, while

the remaining 20 were male respondents. Of the 50, a total of 38 (made up of 26 females and 12 males) were civil servants in the service of the Sokoto state government. The remaining 12 respondents (made up of 8 males and 4 females) are distributed in the following order. Non-Governmental organization (STCI) 7, retired civil servants (3), self employed, 2 of the 30 female respondents 16 are married, 2 are widowed, eight divorced, while four are spinsters. None of the women respondents including the four spinsters was below the age of 20 with the oldest aged 41. Two of the women respondents professed other religions apart from Islam.

All the 20 male respondents were married with 14 of the 20 married to polygamous families. Their ages ranges from 24 to 43 years. Three of the male respondents were adherents of religion(s) other than Islam, among this is one male respondent married a polygamous husband.

3.5 Instrumentation

. The questionnaire did not require too wordy responses as respondents were required to respond mostly to questions thus;

- i. Yes/no

- ii. Strongly agree
- iii. Agree
- iv. Undecided
- v. Disagree

3.6 Validity of the Research Instruments

The validity of the instrument was determined by first, a number of items were drafted and taken to the supervisor and other experts in the field of research to vet and determine their suitability for the purpose of the research. From the corrections and suggestions received from the supervisor and experts, a total of 24 items were selected out of the 30 items on the two questionnaires. At the end, the researcher was able to come up with the final items based on the observation and comments of the supervisor and experts that were given the instrument to vet. This measure is known as content validity.

3.7 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The reliability of the two tests was ensured using the test re-test method. This was done by administering fifty (50) copies of the questionnaire to 50 students from women development centre, after 2

weeks period of interval, another fifty (50) questionnaires were re-administered to the same sets of students, the reliability index of 0.86 was achieved which was considered moderately good for use.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The instrument developed was used for the collection of data for the study. To eliminate abuse to the barest minimum, the administration of the questionnaire was controlled by one on one interview in the Hausa language. The responses so collected were compiled and analyzed.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

To analyze the data, descriptive statistics such as simple percentages and frequencies were adopted in the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis, interpretation and discussion. The data collected were used to answer the four research questions put forth in chapter one. The research questions are as follows:

1. What was the motivation for the establishment of the Women Centre for Continuing Education?
2. What are the possible reasons for the new enthusiasm on the part of the women; single, married, divorced and widows for rejoining formal education?
3. Could there be different views among single, married, divorced and widows for rejoining formal education after years of break?
4. What are the possible prospects of the centre for boosting women education in Sokoto state and realization of gender parity in education?

Research Question One:

What was the motivation for the establishment of the Women Centre for Continuing Education?

The study sought to find out the motivation for the establishment of the centre, the first of its kind in the state from the education policy makers.

This variable investigates why the state government decided to establish a school to cater for this category of people, since in other schools only the single girls are admitted. The responses of the respondents i.e. policy makers, civil servant and members of NGO are presented in table 4.2.1.

Table 4.2.1 Views of policy makers and stakeholders on motivation for the establishment of the Women Centre for Continuing Education?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
To provide educational opportunities for women who dropped out of school prematurely and who want to rejoin formal school system to further their education	16	32%
To provide various forms of trade like tailoring, knitting, etc. for interested women with a view to increase their income generating capacities	13	26%
To attract widows and divorcees who want to enroll into formal school system to further their education pending the time they get suitors for marriage	7	14%
To empower women to participate into various activities in government and private sector in line with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals	14	28
Total	50	100

From the table 4.2.1, it can be deduced that according to the views of the respondents, what motivated the government of Sokoto state towards establishment of the centre for continuing education was to provide educational opportunities for women who dropped out of

schools prematurely and who wanted to rejoin formal school system to further their education, this represents 32%. Another reason was with the view of empowering women for active participation into various activities of the government and private sector in line with the achievement of MDGs which is represented as 28% of the respondents. 26% of the respondents said it was established to provide vocational skills to interested women which would increase their income generating capacities while the remaining 14% said it was to attract widows and divorcees to further their education pending on the time they get suitors for marriage.

Research Question Two

What are the possible reasons for the new enthusiasm on the part of women; single, married, divorcees, widowed for rejoining formal education?

This variable sought to investigate what actually motivated the respondents to go back to school. It might be as a result of frustration as the suitors who forced them out of schools have now decided to divorce them or are dead (for the widows) or they saw no need for schooling at that time and they now know the importance of education

(singles), and or their husbands feel they want educated women and so send them to school (married).

Table 4.3: Views of student respondents on new enthusiasm to rejoin formal education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Husbands wish	8	2.7%
Self interest	63	21%
To be enlightened	63	21%
To get a good job	166	55.3%
Total	300	100%

From table 4.3, it was identified that more than half of the respondents rejoined formal education to get good jobs in order to improve their family economy and be self reliant, this is represented by 55.3% of the respondents, while 2.7% of the respondents rejoined because their husband wanted them to rejoin 21% each said they rejoined to be more enlightened and also saw the need and interest to rejoin the formal school.

Research Question Three

Could there be different views among single, married, divorcees, and widows for rejoining formal education after years of break?

This variable sought to investigate the possible differences in views amongst single, married, widowed and divorcees for rejoining formal education. Table 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 reveal the various views of these respondents for rejoining formal education system.

Table 4.3.1: Views of single women respondents for rejoining formal education

Motivational factor	Frequency	Percentage
To be enlightened on govt. programmes and policies	10	41.7%
To get a good job	14	58.3%
Total	24	100%

From table 4.3.1, 41.7% of the single respondents said they rejoined formal education to be enlightened, while 58.3% of the respondents said they rejoined to enable them to secure better jobs both at federal and state levels to uplift their standards of living.

Table 4.3.2: Views of married respondents on reasons for rejoining formal education

Motivational factor	Frequency	Percentage
Husband's wish	8	66.7%
To be enlightened on govt. programmes and policies	2	16.7%
To get a good job	2	16.7%
Total	12	100%

From the table 4.3.2, 8 out of the 12 married respondents representing 66.7% said they rejoined formal educational system because of their husbands' wish of doing so. This is a good development since husbands are now willing to send their wives to school. 16.7% of the married respondents said they rejoined formal education to be enlightened and another 16.7% said they rejoined to get better jobs so that they can take part in the sharing of their children's responsibilities and not allowing only their husbands to do so.

Table 4.3.3: Views of divorcees on reasons for rejoining formal education

Motivational factor	Frequency	Percentage
To be enlightened on govt. programmes and policies	26	39.4%
To get a good job	40	60.6%
Total	66	100%

From table 4.3.3, 60.6% of the divorcees said they rejoined formal education so that they could get good jobs, while 39.4% said they rejoined formal education in order to be more enlightened so that they would know their rights.

Table 4.3.4: Views of widowed respondents on reasons for rejoining formal education

Motivational factor	Frequency	Percentage
To be enlightened on govt. programmes and policies	88	44.4%
To get a good job	110	55.6%
Total	198	100%

From table 4.3.4, 55.6% of the widowed respondents said they joined formal education to enable them get good jobs to enable them take care of themselves and their children who are the products of

their marriages, while 44.4% of the widowed respondents joined formal school to enable them to be more enlightened on government programmes and policies.

Research Question Four

What could be the possible prospects of the centre for boosting women education in Sokoto state and realization of gender parity in education?

Support for the Establishment of the Centre

This variable sought views of respondents on whether the establishment of the centre had succeeded in boosting women education in the state. The respondents here are the students, policy makers, civil servants and members of NGO.

Table 4.4.1: Views of students, policy maters and stakeholders in Support of the centre for boosting women education

Item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Do you think that the establishment of the centre has succeeded in giving women education a boost in the state?	Yes	300	85.7%
	No	50	14.3%
Total		350	100%

From table 4.4.1, 85.7% of the respondents were in agreement that the establishment of the centre was a welcomed development as it has helped to boost women education in the state. On the other hand 14.3% said they did not see the centre as boosting women education in the state and so it was not a welcomed development to them.

Conducive School Environment as Catering for needs of Students

This variable sought the views of the student respondents on whether the school environment was conducive enough for the students and whether it caters for their needs as this will further attract more women to enroll thereby boosting women education in the state.

Table 4.4.2: View of students on school environment , whether conducive or not

Item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
School environment is conducive and friendly to accommodate students and caters for their needs	Yes	250	85.7%
	No	50	14.3%
Total		300	100%

From table 4.4.2, 85.7% of the respondents agreed that the school environment was conducive enough to attract more students as

their needs were being catered for due to the flexibility of the centre and its unique nature. On the other hand 14.3% felt the environment was not conducive enough. Here we see that the government has really done enough to create educational opportunities for female school dropouts.

Respondents plan for further education

Most of the respondents re-joined formal education because they have realized that they are lagging behind and want to pick up from where they stopped and they don't mind their ages, but could still want to re-join formal school even if they are in a class where their own sons or daughters are their teachers or they are in the same class with their children. This variable investigates whether the respondents want to go beyond secondary school or not.

Table 4.4.3: Views of students as to plans to further education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Have plans to further education	270	90%
Have no plans	10	3.3%
Undecided	20	6.7%
Total	300	100%

Another cheering news according to the data in table 4.4.3 is that there was a growing urge for higher education amongst female students 270 respondents had plans to further their studies beyond secondary school, 20 were undecided and 10 have no such plans. The number could be improved with more enlightenment campaigns.

The way forward

How can the problems of women education be solved. Since women have now realized the role they can play in the family and the society at large, and they have now tightened their belts and picked up the challenge to go back to school and continue from where they stopped it is an encouraging step forward. This variable sought to investigate how the government can improve on the women folk views of policy makers, civil servants, and members of NGO were sought.

Table 4.4.4: Views of policy makers and stakeholders on the way forward

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Make education totally free for girls	33	66%
More strict enforcement of laws	4	26%
Parents should be further enlightened	13	26%
Total	50	100%

From table 4.4.4 Majority of the respondents i.e. 33 said if education is made totally free for girls it will go a long way to improve enrolment into schools as this will take care of cost for uniforms, transportation and stationeries. 13 of the respondents said parents should further be enlightened to know the importance of female education and 4 of the respondents said the law prohibiting withdrawal should be strictly enforced.

Need for the establishment of more centres in all the local government areas of the state.

If more centres are established in all the other local government areas of the state, the rural women will be motivated to enroll, as those in the villages might have the interest of gaining more knowledge but do not have the opportunity to enroll as the one in the

state urban area is too far from them. This variable investigates views of the respondents on the establishment of more centres.

Table 4.4.5: Views of policy makers, civil servants and NGO on establishment of more centres in the 23 local government areas

Item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Do you think the state government should build more of this centers in all the 23 local government areas to boost women education	Yes	45	90%
	No	5	10%
	Total	50	100%

From the data on table 4.4.5, 90% of the respondents agree that if more centres are established in all the local government in the state, it will boost the morale of rural women who have interest in formal education to enroll, since the centre wants to boost the women folk and make them become important in future. 10% of the respondents said they are not in support of the establishment of more centres.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

Nigeria, Africa's most populated country, has 140 million people and more than 250 ethnic groups. Although Nigeria has had National Policy on education since 1977, it has not been implanted effectively and efficiently due to rapid population growth, insufficient political will, a long period of undemocratic government, and poor management of scarce resources, women and girls have been most affected by these negative factors. The national literacy rate for females is only 56%, compared to 72% for males and in certain states the females literacy, enrolment and achievement rates are much lower. For example, girls net enrolment in Sokoto, one of the six target states under the UNICEF African Girls education initiative, is 15% compared to 59% for boys.

Studies in recent times by international agencies such as the World Bank, UNDP, and UNICEF have suggested a strong link between education and national development. It is in this light that as part of the millennium development goals (MDG) the United Nations in the year 2000 prevailed on governments to ensure all children of school going age are enrolled in school by 2015. Indeed, it was part of

the belief of the United Nations that by 2006, member nations of the United Nations would have achieved gender parity in school enrolment. As it stands today, Nigeria remains one of the parts of sub Saharan Africa where the issue of gender parity remains as disturbing as ever. School enrolment in Nigeria as low as it is, compared to other parts of the world remains unfavorably titled in favour of males. There is little to show that gender parity and full enrolment of children of school going age would be achieved in the nearest future.

Poor access of females to education, the focus of this study, has a long history behind it. Age old cultural and traditional practices, poverty, ignorance and religion are among the factors that have contributed to stand in the way of female education. Of recent there has been attempts at redressing the situation. Women centre for continuing education is one of the efforts by the state government in that regard. But this cannot solve the problem especially in the absence of effective laws to prosecute parents who withdraw their daughters from school for whatever reasons. Besides, there is what earlier studies have confirmed as hidden cost of education, which makes its delivery very expensive. The preponderance of male

teachers in school is another excuse some parents make to keep their daughters out of school.

The MDGs specifically aim at eradicating poverty, promoting employment, promoting good governance and liberalizing and democratizing access to education. In line with this realization on the part of government, there has been rapid increase in the number of schools and an even greater enrolment in schools in addition to employment of teachers. This study has attempted to find out why female education continues to occupy the back seat inspite of the seemingly huge expenditure committed to the sector.

The establishment of the women centre for continuing education is one strong step by the Sokoto state government to make women rejoin formal education, and from the study it has improved enrolment due to the flexibility of the school such that they are allowed to come to school with their babies, they close from school by 1:30pm so that they can get home in time. They also have opportunity to learn vocational trades which can make them self reliant. As they can open up shops where they can make soaps to sell, they could sew and knit cardigans on commercial basis. This is a very good way of

motivating them and the students express their willingness to further their education up to university level.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

For a very long time, the belief has persisted that the religion of Islam and cultural practices in Sokoto state were the prominent problems facing female education. The two factors have often been cited as being responsible for parents refusal to send their daughters to school or to withdraw there daughters from school for the purpose of giving them out in marriage to some extent, this may be true even though it is no longer tenable to look at the problem solely from this point of view at least going by the findings of this study.

1. The research found out that the Sokoto state government established the Women Centre for Continuing Education in order to motivate females who dropped out of school prematurely as a result of being withdrawn from schools by their parents to be given out in marriages. The centre was established to provide educational opportunities for women who want to rejoin formal school system to further their education. It was also to provide various forms of vocational

skills like tailoring, knitting, weaving, cookery, etc. for interested women with a view to increase their income generating capacity. Widows, single and divorcees are also attracted into this school pending on the time they get suitors for marriage. This school also empowers women for participation into various activities in government and private sector in line with the achievement of Millennium Development Goals. The state government also wants women to fill their quota both at state and national levels, hence the establishment of Ministry for Women Affairs.

2. The Women Centre for Continuing Education has created a new enthusiasm on the part of women, single, married, divorced and widows, whose dreams were cut short due to one reason or the other. This is to boost their standard of living. These women were encouraged or motivated to go back to school to improve their status. Most of the married women were sent to the school by their husbands who now want their wives to go back to school after the long break. The single, divorced and widowed mostly rejoined formal schooling to get themselves more

enlightened to know more about government programmes and policies, to get themselves better job opportunities which will enable them to improve their family income and take care of their children. They also rejoined to get better suitors to marry at the appropriate time i.e. after secondary education or tertiary education as most of them indicated their plans to go beyond secondary school.

3. Another finding of the research is that there were similar views between divorcees, single and widows in rejoining formal education. These views included to be more enlightened to know the government policies and programmes; also to get themselves better jobs so that they could be self reliant. But there was a slightly different view when it comes to married women, because majority of them rejoined the formal school as requested by their husbands, because as they said their husbands motivated them to rejoin, very few of them said they rejoined to get a good job or to be enlightened.
4. The Women Centre for Continuing Education as the study found out is a unique centre with a high level of flexibility to

attract the students, because they are allowed to come along with their children who are not of school going age, they are also allowed to breastfeed their babies when the need arises, with these opportunities the centre has succeeded in giving women education boost in the state. This is the only school in the state that provides both academic and vocational atmosphere to students. The students see it as a welcomed development for them, because earlier formal schools at the secondary or primary level was only for young girls who were not married. But with the women centre those of them who were unfortunate to be withdraw from school for marriage have an opportunity to rejoin and sit for external exams that can lead them to go up to tertiary institutions irrespective of age and status.

5.2 Conclusion

Over the years, huge resources have been committed to the education sector with little or nothing to show for it. What this means is that education has become a draining pipe and from the receding prospects associated with it, it is unlikely that neither the ambitious.

Religious beliefs, traditional and cultural practices are some of the impediments in the path of female education. The study further revealed that even though there appears to be growing desire on the part of women to acquire education, there is still a lot to be done especially in traditionally inward looking societies.

The study further, revealed that much as these girls have high interest in formal education one big problem they have to contend with is the prancing eyes of suitors, most of who are highly placed in society and are charged with promoting female education. Although the women centre for continuing education allows married women, when these girls are withdrawn to be married out, they spend time before coming back to the school, while their mates whom they started with must have graduated. This is a set back in their schooling.

Poverty plays a pivotal role in whether female education receives a boost or remained down. This study further revealed that poverty is often cited as a reason for withdrawing girls from school. In theory education is free but there are other aspects of education, which make it expensive like the cost of school uniform, transportation to and from school, exercise books etc, this is what experts call 'hidden cost of education'.

5.4 Recommendations

If girls are to be allowed to contribute to national development, it is suggested that a serious approach be adopted towards educating them. In this regard the following recommendations could be useful:

1. School environment should be made more conducive for learning. This can be done through the promotion of more vocational skills and extra-curricular activities, this will make the students motivated as they can participate in competitions within and outside the school. It is also a step forward if certain incentives could be introduced in the women centre like making education totally free for the students, these could include providing them with free meals, stationeries, transport fares to

and from school. This will take care of any burden which might hinder enrolment into the school by intending students who cannot afford these costs.

2. More efforts should be made to employ more female teachers as they could serve as role models to create enthusiasm on the part of women to come in and get the necessary education that could lead them to professional courses like Doctors, Nurses, Lawyers, etc. Enlightenment campaigns should be stepped up targeting women, parents and husbands as a means of further sensitizing the populace on the importance of education especially for the girl child. The government should also give teeth to its own laws prohibiting the withdrawal of girls from school, and create more job opportunities for women in government cabinet, this will make women have a greater enthusiasm to obtain literacy whether they are single, married, divorced or widow. As they could always pick up from where they stopped.

3. Government to endeavour to provide more job opportunities for women as all the women have the same view of getting better

jobs to enable them improve their family income. Also awareness campaigns should be gingered up, to make women single, married, divorced and widows know government programmes and policies, through which they will be aware of their rights and the positions they could hold in government settings, women should be given their quota at the state level, a lot of parastatals when observed mainly have males as their staff, a competitive ground should be given where women will be fixed in most government parastatals, because what a man can do, it is said a woman can do and even better. Also husbands have now realized that their wives need formal education, so they should be more encouraged to motivate their wives to attain a literacy level instead of enticing them with money to leave school and marry them.

4. The government should also try to open more women centres for continuing education in all the local government areas of the state, this is to boost women in rural areas to come to rejoin formal education, hence reducing illiteracy amongst women in

the villages. Women in the villages will also appreciate the centre if given the opportunities.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This researcher is a student of the department of Education, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, pursuing a Masters Degree programme in Administration and Planning. She is conducting a research on “Policy and Situation Analysis of Women Continuing Education in Sokoto State” a Study of Women Centre for Continuing Education.

In this regard, she seeks your co-operation to honestly respond to these statements. Your responses should best describe your feeling of each statement relating to the research topic. All information provided will be used for the purpose of this study and shall be treated with strict confidentiality.

Thanks

Ummu Kaltumi Yakubu
(Researcher)

Section 'A': Personal Information

In this section, you are requested to kindly provide the following information about yourself.

Occupation/place of work

Age

Marital status

Sex

Level of withdrawal (students only)

Reasons for withdrawal (students only)

Section 'B': Research Questions

1. Number of children

(a) One [] (b) Two [] (c) Three []

(d) Four [] (e) More than four []

2. State of dropping out of school

(a) Primary school [] (b) After primary school []

(c) Junior secondary [] (d) Senior secondary []

3. Reason(s) for dropping out
- (a) Saw no need for schooling []
- (b) High cost of schooling []
- (c) Hostile, poor school environment []
4. Level of parents education
- (a) None [] (b) Primary []
- (c) Secondary [] (d) Post secondary []
5. Why did you decide to return to school
- (a) Husband's wish [] (b) Self interest []
- (c) To be more enlightened [] (d) To get a good job []
6. Area your parents/husband in support of your return to school
- (a) Yes [] (b) No []
7. From your experience do parents encourage withdrawal of daughters from school?
- (a) Agree [] (b) Undecided [] (c) Disagree []
8. Parents level of education determine children's education:
- (a) Agree [] (b) Undecided [] (c) Disagree []

9. Government is doing enough for female education:

(a) Agree [] (b) Undecided [] (c) Disagree []

10. Poverty/religion (Islam) is responsible for withdrawing girls from school?

Poverty: (a) Yes [] (b) No []

Religion (a) Yes [] (b) No []

11. Do you plan to further your education after secondary school?

(a) Yes [] (b) No []

12. Does child rearing affect your studies in a negative way?

(a) Seriously [] (b) Slightly []

(c) Does not affect []

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POLICY MAKERS, CIVIL SERVANTS AND MEMBERS OF NGO

This researcher is a student of the department of Education, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, pursuing a Masters Degree programme in Administration and Planning. She is conducting a research on “Policy and Situation Analysis of Women Continuing Education in Sokoto State” a Study of Women Centre for Continuing Education.

In this regard, she seeks your co-operation to honestly respond to these statements. Your responses should best describe your feeling of each statement relating to the research topic. All information provided will be used for the purpose of this study and shall be treated with strict confidentiality.

Thanks

Ummu Kaltumi Yakubu
(Researcher)

1. Age:

(a) 20 – 25 [] (b) 26 – 30 []

(c) 31 – 39 [] (d) 40 and above []

2. Marital status:

(a) Married [] (b) Single []

(c) Divorced [] (d) Widowed []

3. Do you support the establishment of Women Centre for Continuing Education?

(a) Yes [] (b) No []

4. What is responsible for your choice of above?

(a) Helps to motivate women education []

(b) Encourages high level of enrolment for girls []

(c) Undecided []

5. Are you aware of laws prohibiting withdrawal of girls from school?

(a) Aware [] (b) Not aware []

6. If aware do you think government is enforcing the law?
- (a) Yes [] (b) No []
7. If your answer is No, why do you think it is difficult for government to enforce its law?
- (a) Government cannot control parents []
- (b) Ignorance on the part of enforcers []
- (c) Insincerity on the part of government []
8. Do you agree with the view that there is a disdain for female education?
- (a) Agree [] (b) Disagree []
9. If you agree, what is responsible for this disdain?
- (a) Religion [] (b) Ignorance [] (c) Poverty []
10. What do you think could be done to improve education for girls
- (a) Make education totally free for girls []
- (b) More-strict enforcement of laws []
- (c) Parents should be further enlightened []

11. Do you think that Sokoto State Government should establish similar centres for women continuing education in all the 23 Local Government Areas of the state?

(a) Yes [] (b) No []

12. Do you think that the establishment of the centre has succeeded in giving women education a boost in the state?

(a) Yes [] (b) No []