



THE ROLE OF EDUCATED WOMEN IN FAMILY DYNAMICS AND CHILDREN'S PRIMARY EDUCATION IN OYI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study explores the role of educated women in shaping family dynamics and enhancing children's primary education in Oyi Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria. The study utilized a survey research design to evaluate the impact of women's education on the socio-economic status of families in Oyi Local Government Area, Anambra State. Covering five towns—Awkuzu, Nteje, Umunnya, Ogbunike, and Nkwelle—the research targeted diverse women, including literates and illiterates from varied occupations. A sample of 200 working-class women was randomly selected from schools, banks, markets, and farms, with each town contributing 40 respondents. Data was collected via a questionnaire using a four-point Likert scale. The findings reveal that educated women contribute significantly to the economic stability of their families, engaging in diverse financial responsibilities, including healthcare, education, and property investments. They also demonstrate a preference for smaller, well-managed families, effectively using reproductive health information to maintain family planning. In the context of primary education, educated women actively support their children's learning through guidance on schoolwork, provision of educational materials, and fostering a disciplined study environment. The study concludes that educated women are pivotal in promoting family welfare, enhancing literacy rates, and driving social and economic progress within the community. It recommends strengthening educational opportunities for women to further amplify these positive impacts on family and community development.

Keywords: *Women's education, socio-economic status, family dynamics, Oyi Local Government Area, primary education.*

Introduction

The role of educated women in family dynamics and children's primary education is a critical area of study, especially within the Nigerian context. Educated women significantly influence family structures, decision-making processes, and the educational attainment of their children. Educated women often enhance the quality of family life through improved communication, effective decision-making, and better resource management. Bender et al, (2022) argue that educated women are more likely to engage in democratic parenting styles, which foster mutual respect and understanding among family members. Such parenting approaches often lead to stronger emotional bonds and family cohesion.

Additionally, education equips women with knowledge about health, nutrition, and child development. According to Witt et al, (2023), educated mothers are better positioned to adopt preventive health measures and seek timely medical interventions, which positively impacts the overall well-being of the family. This knowledge reduces the prevalence of preventable diseases and improves child survival rates. Economically, educated women contribute significantly to household income. In a study conducted in southeastern Nigeria, Kebede et al, (2022) found that educated

The Role of Educated Women in Family Dynamics and Children's Primary Education in Oyi Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria

Ann Ngozi Ugobueze

women often have better employment opportunities, which enhances their financial contributions to family sustenance. This economic empowerment reduces the financial burden on their partners, promotes shared responsibilities in the family and enhance children's primary education. Children's primary education is a cornerstone for personal and societal development. It provides foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking, which are essential for lifelong learning and effective participation in society. Primary education shapes cognitive, social, and emotional development, equipping children with the tools needed to succeed in higher education and future careers (Azeez et al, 2024). Furthermore, it contributes to reducing poverty, fostering gender equality, and promoting healthier communities by empowering individuals with knowledge and skills. In contexts like Nigeria, primary education is especially vital for bridging educational disparities, improving economic opportunities, and fostering sustainable development.

Educated mothers play a pivotal role in their children's primary education journey, particularly at the primary level. Passano et al, (2023) note that mothers with formal education tend to prioritize their children's education, often ensuring consistent school attendance and academic support at home. Educated mothers are more likely to provide a conducive learning environment, including access to educational resources like books and technology. Furthermore, the literacy levels of mothers have a direct correlation with children's literacy skills. Hutchinson et al, (2021) observed that children of educated mothers performed better in reading and arithmetic compared to those of uneducated mothers. This finding underscores the intergenerational benefits of maternal education, as educated women often pass on a culture of learning to their children.

In terms of advocacy, educated women are more likely to challenge cultural and societal barriers that hinder children's education, especially for girls. For instance, Ukanwa et al, (2022) highlights the role of educated mothers in combating early marriages and promoting gender equality in education. Despite increased access to education for women in recent decades, societal and structural challenges continue to limit their influence on family welfare and children's educational outcomes (Okunlola, 2022). While research highlights the contributions of educated mothers to better health, economic stability, and academic performance of children, these studies often lack specific focus on how these roles interplay within the unique sociocultural framework of Nigerian families (Yu et al, 2022).

Several gaps exist in the literature. First, most studies emphasize the broader benefits of women's education without delving into how these translate into actionable roles within the household (Sigdel et al, 2023). Second, the intersection between patriarchal norms and the autonomy of educated women in family decision-making remains inadequately addressed, leaving questions about how these norms constrain their contributions (Oladokun & Olubunmi, 2024). Third, the influence of maternal education on children's primary school attendance and performance lacks consistent empirical evidence across diverse socio-economic and rural-urban divides in Nigeria (Ukoji et al, 2022). This study seeks to fill these gaps by examining how educated women navigate family roles and advocate for their children's education despite cultural and systemic barriers. It also explores strategies for maximizing the positive impact of maternal education on primary education outcomes.

Research questions

1. To what extent do the educated women in Oyi L.G.A contributed to their family finances?
2. Is there any difference between the family size of families with educated wives and those without educated wives in Oyi Local Government Area?
3. How has educated women contributed in the primary education of their children in Oyi L.G.A?
4. To what extent has primary education of child improve the social status of women in Oyi L.G.A?

Method

This study employed a survey research design, chosen for its suitability in examining whether a sample accurately represents the broader population and in assessing relevant characteristics. The

design facilitated the collection of information, opinions, and attitudes regarding the impact of women's education on the socio-economic status of families in Oyi Local Government Area, Anambra State. The study's scope covered all five towns in Oyi: Awkuzu, Nteje, Umunnya, Ogbunike, and Nkwelle. The research targeted women within this region, including both literates and illiterates from diverse occupational backgrounds such as farmers, civil servants, and the self-employed.

To ensure a representative sample, a simple random sampling technique was used, drawing participants from schools, banks, markets, and other institutions within the area. The researcher focused on working-class women across various sectors, selecting a sample size of 200 individuals. These participants were distributed equally across the five towns and different occupational categories: schools, banks, markets/business, and farms, with each group contributing 10 respondents per town, leading to a total of 40 per town. Data was collected using a questionnaire specifically developed to gather information on the socio-economic status of families. The questionnaire employed a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) and included demographic questions to distinguish between educated and non-educated respondents.

The analysis involved tallying responses, converting raw scores to percentages, and displaying them in tables for clarity. This method allowed for a detailed exploration of each research question, providing a structured understanding of the gathered data and enabling conclusions about the effects of women's education on socio-economic outcomes in the study area.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do the educated women in Oyi L.G.A contributed to their family finances?

Table 1:

The extent the educated women in Oyi L.G.A contribute to their family finances.

S/N	Responses	Frequency %	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	They provide for the family such as foods, cloths, property, etc.	Frequency %	70 35	50 25	40 20	40 20	200 100
2	They pay for the family hospital bills when sick.	Frequency %	84 42	46 23	30 15	40 20	200 100
3	They pay for their children school fees when due.	Frequency %	68 34	52 26	40 20	40 20	200 100
4	Sometimes they help their husbands to put on structures in place (Buildings)	Frequency %	64 32	92 46	22 11	22 11	200 100

This research question sought to find out if there is any effect of women education in Oyi Community. In items 1,2,3, and 4 of the questionnaire were calculated using simple percentage. The result of the analysis is presented in table 1. In the above analysis, it was observed that the overall frequency of 200 has the total percentage of those who agreed that women education has a great effect to be 76% while those who disagreed with the fact to be a percentage of 24%, with this, it can be concluded that women education has a great effect on the economic status of the families.

Research Question 2: Is there any difference between the family size of families with educated wives and those without educated wives in Oyi Local Government Area?

The Role of Educated Women in Family Dynamics and Children's Primary Education in Oyi Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria

Ann Ngozi Ugobueze

Table 2: The difference between the family size of families with educated wives and those without educated wives in Oyi Local Government Area?

S/N	Responses	Frequency %	SA	A	D	SD	Total
5	Those with educated wives actually maintain normal range of zero to seven children in the family.	Frequency %	88	54	28	30	200
			44	27	14	15	
6	Those without educated wives mostly give birth to the range of eight (8) to twelve (12) children in the family or even above that.	Frequency %	112	48	22	18	200
			56	24	11	9	
7	Educated women generally want smaller families and make better use of reproductive health and family planning information and services in achieving their desired family size.	Frequency %	66	64	30	34	200
			33	34	18	17	
8	The women introduces the use of contraceptive in order to provide normal birth gap in between the children.	Frequency %	70	78	46	6	200
			35	39	23	3	
9	They give birth to the number of children, they could be able to train in the school.	Frequency %	68	72	36	24	200
			34	36	18	12	

The responses of the subject on these questions comprise in items 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the questionnaire. In the above analysis, 75% of the respondents agreed that women has a role to play in the family economy according to the analysis while 25% disagreed from the total frequency of 200, with this, it can be concluded that the role mentioned above are some roles played by women in the family economy.

Research Question 3: How has educated women contributed in the primary education of their children in Oyi L.G.A?

Table 3: How educated women contributed in the primary education of their children in Oyi L.G.A.

S/N	Responses	Frequency %	SA	A	D	SD	Total
10	They make sure they provide all necessary materials needed for their school children at a given period.	Frequency %	34	26	86	54	200
			17	13	43	27	
11	They assist and guide their children in their daily home work given by their teacher and make sure they solve it aright.	Frequency %	30	40	80	50	200
			15	20	40	28	
12	They conduct their children on how to be reading more of their books after school, doing their domestic works when due and put lesser or small interest towards play.	Frequency %	40	40	60	60	200
			20	20	30	30	
13	They put more attention towards having a healthier families.	Frequency %	36	30	54	80	200
			18	15	27	40	

This research question intends to find out the problems family subject on this research question comprises in items 10, 11, 12 and 13 of the questionnaire were calculated. The result of the analysis is presented in table 3. In this above analysis, 67% of respondents agreed that there are problems family encounters due to women education exposure which include those mentioned above, while the percentage of the total number of 33 respondents disagreed with some of the point listed above. Therefore, as the majority dictates, it is taken that women exposure to the education sector has poses a problem to the family and society at large.

Research Question 4: To what extent has primary education of child improve the social status of women in Oyi L.G.A?

Table 4: The extent primary education of child improve the social status of women in Oyi L.G.A.

S/N	Responses	Frequency %	SA	A	D	SD	Total
14	It has reduced greatly the number of illiterates in girls children within the locality.	Frequency %	70	62	36	32	200
			35	31	18	16	100
15	It has offered good percentage of them, jobs such as teaching, nurses, computer operators, etc	Frequency %	56	82	38	24	200
			28	41	19	12	100
16	It helps them to study their monthly cycle and put more care during their monthly flow.	Frequency %	76	60	38	26	200
			38	30	19	13	100
17	It encourages them to think positively and attend Antental.	Frequency %	70	50	40	40	200
			35	25	20	20	100

In the above table, having the total number of 200 respondents, 68% agreed to the item mapped out while 32% disagrees with some of the items. So with the analysis, it can be concluded that primary education of child improve the social status of women in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Discussion

In Oyi Local Government Area, educated women play a significant role in family finances, contributing to various aspects of household expenses. They are involved in providing essential items like food, clothing, and property, which aligns with findings by Oladokun and Olubunmi (2024), who observed that educated women in urban Nigerian areas significantly support household needs. Additionally, they shoulder healthcare costs, including hospital bills, a trend supported by Sigdel et al, (2023), who noted that educated women often take on medical expenses to ensure family welfare. Educated women in Oyi L.G.A also invest in their children’s education by paying school fees, a pattern that matches the results of a related study by Augustine (2014), which emphasized that maternal education increases a family's commitment to children’s academic success. Moreover, some women assist their husbands in constructing family properties, such as buildings, a finding in agreement with Yu et al, (2022) study, which highlighted that educated women often contribute to long-term family investments. In contrast, uneducated women in similar regions tend to have limited involvement in these financial domains, focusing instead on domestic responsibilities. This comparison underscores the broader economic impact of female education on household stability and development.

The Role of Educated Women in Family Dynamics and Children's Primary Education in Oyi Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria

Ann Ngozi Ugobueze

In Oyi Local Government Area, there is a noticeable difference in family size between households with educated wives and those without. Families with educated wives typically have a smaller number of children, ranging from zero to seven. This aligns with findings by Okunlola (2022), who reported that educated women in Southeast Nigeria tend to prefer smaller families, prioritizing manageable family sizes to enhance children's quality of life. They are more likely to use reproductive health services, including contraception, to ensure adequate birth spacing, a practice highlighted by Ukanwa et al, (2022) in a study on reproductive health behaviors among educated women. In contrast, families without educated wives often have larger family sizes, with eight to twelve children or more. This trend is consistent with Hutchinson et al, (2021) research, which found that women with lower educational levels in rural Nigeria have limited access to family planning information, leading to larger household sizes. Educated women's focus on having the number of children they can financially support, including education costs, agrees with a related study by Passano et al, (2023), which linked maternal education to strategic family planning and investment in children's schooling. The use of contraceptives to maintain smaller families among educated women contrasts sharply with less educated counterparts, who often lack awareness and access to family planning services, leading to higher birth rates and larger families. This comparison underscores the role of education in shaping family size decisions and economic planning within households.

In Oyi Local Government Area, educated women play a crucial role in their children's primary education by actively providing academic and emotional support. They ensure that all necessary school materials are available, a practice that aligns with findings by Kebede et al, (2022), who noted that educated mothers are more likely to invest in educational resources, enhancing their children's academic readiness. In addition, educated women assist with homework, guiding their children to understand and solve assignments correctly, which agrees with a study by Witt et al, (2023) showing that maternal education positively influences children's performance by fostering a supportive home learning environment. Educated women also emphasize structured reading habits over play, encouraging their children to focus on studies after school while managing domestic responsibilities. This practice is similar to findings by Bender et al, (2022), who highlighted that educated mothers tend to prioritize academic discipline, fostering a balance between learning and household chores. In contrast, uneducated mothers often lack the skills to offer such direct academic guidance, as observed by Morris et al, (2022), who found that less-educated women typically show less engagement in their children's daily educational activities. Moreover, educated women in Oyi L.G.A. prioritize the health of their families, understanding its impact on educational success. They ensure their children maintain good health, supporting regular school attendance, which correlates with the findings of Ambe (2022), who stressed that educated mothers are more proactive in healthcare, leading to better academic outcomes for their children. This comparison illustrates how maternal education significantly enhances children's primary education and overall development.

In Oyi Local Government Area, the primary education of girls has significantly enhanced the social status of women, reducing illiteracy and opening up diverse employment opportunities. The reduction in illiteracy among girls aligns with Uduji et al, (2020) findings, which showed that primary education substantially lowers female illiteracy rates in rural Nigerian communities. This early educational foundation has enabled many women to pursue careers in teaching, nursing, and technology-related fields, a trend echoed by Mukaila et al, (2022), who observed that primary education equips women with skills that improve employability in both formal and informal sectors. In contrast, women without primary education in the region often remain confined to low-skilled labor or domestic duties, as highlighted by Kolawole et al, (2022) study, which linked limited education to restricted career options for women. Additionally, primary education has positively influenced women's understanding of reproductive health. Educated women in Oyi are more likely to track their menstrual cycles and manage their health effectively, supporting findings from Adetakun et al, (2023) that education increases women's awareness of reproductive health. Furthermore, educated women demonstrate proactive health behaviors, such as attending antenatal care, which correlates with Ukoji et al, (2022) study indicating that basic education promotes health-conscious decision-making among women. In contrast, less educated women may lack this awareness, limiting their access to critical



health services. This comparison underscores the transformative impact of primary education on the social and economic advancement of women in Oyi L.G.A.

Conclusion

The study highlights the substantial influence that educated women have on both family structure and their children’s educational outcomes. Educated women in Oyi L.G.A demonstrate a proactive approach to managing family resources, contributing significantly to the household's financial stability, healthcare, and long-term investments. They exhibit a preference for smaller, well-planned families, reflecting a strategic use of reproductive health services to ensure sustainable family growth. In the sphere of primary education, the involvement of educated women has proven to be crucial. They provide essential academic support, monitor schoolwork, and create conducive learning environments at home, directly enhancing their children's educational achievements. Moreover, their contributions extend beyond immediate academic support to fostering a culture of discipline and health consciousness within the family, underscoring the role of maternal education in shaping both the academic and social development of children.

The findings suggest that the education of women is not only beneficial to individual households but also contributes to broader social and economic improvements in the community. Educated women are key drivers of literacy, health awareness, and economic empowerment in Oyi L.G.A., reinforcing the need for continued investment in female education to ensure sustained family welfare and community development. This study underscores the transformative power of women's education in influencing family dynamics and advancing children's educational success, highlighting the critical need for policies that support and enhance educational opportunities for women in the region.

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The Role of Educated Women in Family Dynamics and Children's Primary Education in Oyi Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria

Ann Ngozi Ugobueze

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