

## ***Social Security, Psychological Well-Being and Academic Outcome of Girl-Child in Colleges of Education in North West, Nigeria***

**<sup>1</sup>Julius Samson, Ph.D**  
[jusam2u21@gmail.com](mailto:jusam2u21@gmail.com)

**<sup>1</sup>Dalhatu M. Halima**  
<sup>1</sup>Department of Guidance and Counselling  
Federal College of Education, Zaria

---

### **Abstract**

*This study sought to investigate the influence of social security and psychological well-being on academic outcome of girl-child in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. Three questions and hypotheses guided the study. The research design adopted for the study was survey. The population of this study was made up of 2,522 female students from 13 colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. The sample size for the study was one hundred and ninety four (194) female students. A researchers-developed questionnaire titled Social Security and Psychological Wellbeing Inventory (SSPWI) was used to collect information from the respondents which was then correlated with their Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). PPMC(r) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of this study revealed that significant relationships exist between social security and psychological well-being; between social security and academic outcome; and between psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in Colleges of Education in North West, Nigeria. It was recommended, among others, that college management should provide a safe and supportive environment that can positively affect female students' well-being thereby enhancing their ability to focus on academics and perform better.*

**Keywords:** social, security, psychological, well-being, academic

### **Introduction**

Education has to be viewed not as a special privilege but as a fundamental human right. As a right, it is to be exercised by everyone regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, political orientation, economic disparity, nationality or geographical differences, and health barriers. Education is known to be a channel to human development. It is a channel through which knowledge, skills, character, values and attitudes are acquired and transmitted to the next generation. Education exposes one to acquire knowledge about one's environment, to know the causes of variations in a person or persons, or groups, and also for sustainable development in a country (Eze & Eze, 2018). According to Okafor

(2016), education is a process of acculturation through which the individual is helped to attain the development of his potential.

In another dimension, Eze and Eze (2018) described education as a process of transmitting the culture, norms, values and ethics of a given society to the younger generations. As a life-long process, it should be accessible anywhere, anytime and under any circumstance. Such right has been ratified by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and by many others. But international instruments per se are not enough nor can the education of the girl child be accomplished by mere lip services (Assefaw, 2010).

Education enables girls to make their own decisions and to influence their families positively. Education saves and improves the lives of girls and women. It allows them greater control of their lives and provides them with skills to contribute to the sustainable development of the society. Educated women have already played or are still playing pivotal roles as presidents, prime ministers, chancellors, political leaders, ministers, community elders, consultants, researchers, managers, among others, in various countries. The number of influential women in international positions is also not deniable. As leaders and managers, they have attested their trustworthiness and still are doing many valuable activities in stepping up production and contributing their part in the sustainable development of their countries (Assefaw, 2010).

Quality education for all regardless of circumstances calls for innovations in improving the standard of learning and increasing life-long learning. Education makes people employable, brings in equity and inclusion, opens up other levels of learning and establishes technical know-how or more technological advancement in life, helps to curb peer influence and unnecessary quest for wealth and money. In Nigeria, it was revealed that about 9 million (37%) out of school children roam about on the street daily. Nigeria continues with a high rate of out-of-school children every year. Out of this figure, out-of-school girls are the highest with about 5.5 million girl children out of school (Tyoakaa et al., 2014). The level of girl child education in Nigeria is poor and shocking; and needs to be addressed.

Girl-Child within the context of the Nigerian environment has been given several definitions by different scholars. The National Child Welfare Policy (1989) as cited by Ada (2007) defines the girl-child as a person below 14 years of age. Offorma (2009) and Juliem (2018) viewed the girl-child as a biological female offspring from birth to eighteen

(18) years of age. This is the age before one becomes a young adult. This period covers the crèche, nursery or early childhood (0–5 years), primary (6–12 years) and secondary school (12–18 Years). During this period, the young child is totally under the care of adults who may be her parents or guardians and older siblings. It is made up of infancy, childhood, early and late adolescence stages of development. During this period, the girl-child is malleable and builds and develops her personality and character. She is very dependent on her significant others, those on whom she models her behaviour through observation, repetition and imitation. Her physical, mental, social, spiritual and emotional developments start and progress to get to the peak at the young adult stage (Tyoakaa et al., 2014).

Education is the process of providing information to an inexperienced person to help him/her develop physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, politically and economically (Juliem, 2018). In education parlance, it means that the individual has acquired adequate and appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, known as cognitive, psychomotor and affective behaviours to be able to function optimally as a citizen. These behaviours are the focus of training individuals in institutions of learning. The planned and systematic training given in an institution of learning is formal education. The programme is organized, planned and systematically implemented. In an informal education, there is no plan and the training is haphazard and accidental (Offorma, 2009).

According to Ocho (2005), education is the process through which individuals are made functional members of their society. It is a process through which the young ones acquire knowledge, realize their potentialities and use them for self-actualization, to be useful to themselves and others. It is a means of preserving, transmitting and improving the culture of the society. In every society, education connotes the acquisition of something good, something worthwhile.

Education is generally viewed as a positive force with a wide-ranging impact on society and human development. This force is more unique for the girl-child who is seen as a child today but who later becomes a woman and also a mother. Educating the girl means educating the whole family. What is true of families is also true of communities and ultimately the whole nation (UNICEF, 2004). According to Bellamy (2003), there can be no positive significant or sustainable transformation in societies and in fact in poverty reductions until girls receive quality basic education they need to take their rightful place as equal partners in sustainable development. It is worthwhile noting however that the purpose of women's education is to enable them to contribute to life, adapt to society, develop and broaden their minds and horizons, have all-round development, fill the gaps for those who did not go to school or dropped out of school, prepare young adolescents

and adults to be able to cope with domestic work and family life socially, economically, and politically (Udungwomen, 2004).

According to UNICEF (2003), education is everybody's human right. It means that no girl, however poor her family or her country is, should be excluded from schooling. Educating girls is the best investment for societal development. The short and long-term benefits of education to girls and society at large include: educated girls develop essential life skills, such as self-confidence, the ability to participate effectively in society and protect themselves from HIV/AIDS infection, sexual exploitation and pressure for early marriage and childbirth; they gain the skills and competencies for gainful employment, enabling them to be economically productive members of society. Educated mothers are more likely to send their children to school, thus promoting continued and lifelong learning; they nourish their children better, their children are therefore healthier and child mortality is reduced and are less likely to die in childbirth.

Social security, which is also known as human security is a concept of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “everyone, as a member of the society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization”, through national effort and international co-operation and by the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality. In simple terms, this means that the society in which a person lives should help the girl child to develop and to make the most of all the advantages (culture, work, social welfare), which are offered in the country. Social security is the first principle that no government should toy with.

Social security may be referred to as the action programmes of government intended to promote the welfare of the population through assistance measures guaranteeing access to sufficient resources for food and shelter and to promote health and wellbeing for the population at large and potentially vulnerable segments such as children, the elderly, the sick and the unemployed. Services providing social security are often called social services. Social security is supposed to take a chunk of part of the original government programmes. Social security, therefore covers the protection of lives and property, unemployment, kidnapping, sexual harassment, terrorism, personal and physical; the social economic crisis, social and political crisis; necessities in food, health, education and shelter of the girl child; and, community and environmental security. Simpson et al. (2021) found that expansions in social security benefits improve mental health outcomes. Reductions in social security support lead to adverse mental health outcomes.

Nigeria ranks 156 out of 187 in the 2011 Human Development Report of the UNDP (Vanguard, 2011). With an average of 1000 maternal mortality per 100,000 of the population, under-five mortality rate of 138 per 1000 live births, life expectancy of 51.9, over 70% of the population living below N1.25 per day, particularly in north-west Nigeria, intensity of deprivation at 57.3, expected school years of children under 7 years as 8.9, the percentage of GDP expenditure on education at 0.8, Nigeria is among the lowest in human development in the world. Moreover, social security may be referred to as social insurance and basic security for citizens (Crone, 2005). Security and psychological well-being are concepts comprising a host of factors, and the first of them is subjectivity. These concepts belong to those constructs which, like other beliefs and feelings, are embedded in the human mind. This means that particular people or group members (for instance, ethnic groups and national representatives) perceive security and well-being through the lens of their personal experience, or from the perspective of their group and its systems. Thus, security and well-being represent a psychological experience which, in most cases, can be measured by questioning whether people feel secure/insecure, balanced/imbanced, among others. Security and well-being cannot be assessed objectively.

Security and psychological well-being are closely tied up with the factor of personal control over a situation. Kreuter and Strecher found that people are likely to assess a situation as less dangerous if, as they suggest, they can gain control over it (Kreuter & Strecher, 1995). This often occurs in drivers who demonstrate exaggerated confidence associated with control over their vehicle, and in people with high levels of professionalism and competence (Slovic et al., 1976). Hence, it is most likely that highly qualified people can overestimate their ability to control a situation since they do not consider it dangerous. Security and psychological well-being are concepts consisting of a host of objective and subjective factors. The opportunity to study and measure them is an important source of information for society. Security and well-being studies deal with the following subjects:

1. Internal and external security factors
2. Economic, ecological, and social security
3. Threats to cultural and public security
4. Protection from troubles of cultural diversity

Human well-being is defined by three fundamental factors: material well-being, health, and security. The pace of modern life, the growing complexity of social systems and relationships, as Giddens (1990) emphasized, and the increasing number of unintended consequences of social actions are essential considerations for the study of psychological security, which can also develop and change with time. A great portion

of the current concepts and theories of psychological security provide a comparatively narrow insight into how psychological security evolves, grows, wanes, or even collapses.

It has been indicated that by 2050, there will be 1.2 billion youth around the world with nine out of ten in developing countries (Basic Education Coalition, 2020). This means that most young people are coming of age in societies that lack basic education and employment opportunities. Improving the educational outcomes of the world's most vulnerable children is a matter of both national and global security. In Nigeria, education should be a key factor in whether people have the capabilities, that is, the literacy, the confidence, and the attitudes they need to actively participate in society. And, as Nigeria works to rebuild after years of conflict, education is a key component in any development strategy. Globally, education is a critical component of building long-term stability and security. Education does not only help to build tolerance and understanding but also provides a path to a better life.

Academic performance is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals. Completion of educational benchmarks such as secondary school diplomas and bachelor's degrees represents academic achievement. Academic performance is commonly measured through examinations or continuous assessments but there is no general agreement on how it is best evaluated or which aspects are most important - procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. Furthermore, there are inconclusive results on which individual factors successfully predict academic performance, elements such as test anxiety, environment, motivation, and emotions require consideration when developing models of school achievement.

Tatiana et al. (2022) found that the female students analyzed showed higher levels of psychological security, and especially in the communication of own ideas in webinar rooms. The same tendency was found in the levels of academic engagement and performance. Kotzé and Kleynhans (2013) conducted a study on psychological well-being and resilience as predictors of first-year students' academic performance. The authors reported that students who appeared to have strong spiritual or religious convictions performed better academically than those with less religious beliefs. Students can benefit from having strong spiritual or religious pillars as well as ongoing cognitive and emotional engagement in their academic work to improve their academic performance.

### **Statement of the problem**

Nigeria, like many other countries, faces unique challenges in the higher institutions, which may impact the psychological well-being and social security of the girl child. Understanding the interplay between these psychological factors and social security is crucial to identifying potential areas of concern and implementing effective interventions for girl-child education in the North West colleges of education in Nigeria. The academic environment in this area often involves heavy workloads, academic stress, increasing kidnapping and rape cases, terrorism, socio-economic crises and political crisis. Security of life and property is the primary objective of every government all over the world. The spate of insecurity in Nigeria is increasing exponentially at an alarming rate as each day passes by. This is true as witnessed in the Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU) agitations of insecurity. Schools and institutions have been plunged with security issues, such as kidnapping, insurgency, economic crisis, political crisis, and rape cases as mentioned above, among others, resulting in loss of lives and destruction of properties. With this, female students and lecturers are burdened daily with emotional and psychological trauma as a result of the gruesome murder of loved ones, payment of ransom on loved ones, and the general populace of the school environment living in fear of the unknown. These factors can contribute to heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and aggression among female students, potentially affecting their overall educational outcome and academic achievement.

### **Research questions**

- i. What is the relationship between social security and psychological well-being among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between social security and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relationship between psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between social security and psychological well-being among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria.

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between social security and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria.

**Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria.

### Methodology

The research design adopted for the study was survey. This design is considered appropriate because it enables the researchers to generate data through standardized collection procedures based on highly structured research instrument(s) and well-defined study concepts and related variables. The population of this study was made up of 2,522 female students from 13 colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. One hundred and ninety four (194) female students were used as the sample size.

Two instruments were used for data collection. They are a researchers-developed questionnaire titled Social Security and Psychological Wellbeing Inventory (SSPWI) and the students' CGPA. The questionnaire comprised of two sections. Section 'A' comprised of items related to social security while section 'B' comprised of question on psychological wellbeing. Both sections comprised of 18-items. The instrument was weighted on a five (5) point scale of Strongly Agree (SA)=5, Agree (A)=4, Undecided (UD)=3, Disagree (D) =2 and Strongly Disagree (SD)=1. The instrument was validated by three experts in the field of Psychology and Measurement and Evaluation from Federal College of Education, Zaria. Simple percentages and PPMC(r) were used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses.

### Presentation of results

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between social security and psychological well-being among female students in Colleges of Education in North West, Nigeria.

**Table 1:** Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between social security and psychological well-being

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Correlation index r	p
Social security	194	80.5581	18.834			
Psychological well-being	194	64.3452	22.712	192	0.652**	0.000

Correlation is significant at 0.05\*\*

Table 1 indicated that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics showed that significant relationship exists between social security and psychological well-being among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. Reasons being that the calculated p-value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. This



shows that the higher the social security, the higher the psychological well-being. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between social security and psychological well-being among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria is hereby rejected.

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between social security and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria.

**Table 2:** Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between social security and academic outcome

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Correlation index r</b>	<b>p</b>
Social security	194	80.5581	18.834			
Academic outcome	194	2.9898	0.2838	192	0.614**	0.001

Correlation is significant at 0.05\*\*

Table 2 indicated that Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics showed that significant relationship exists between social security and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. Reasons being that the calculated p-value of 0.001 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. This shows that the higher the social security, the higher the academic outcome. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between social security and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria is hereby rejected.

**Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria.

**Table 3:** Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between psychological well-being and academic outcome

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Correlation index r	p
Psychological well-being	194	64.3452	22.712			
Academic outcome	194	2.9898	0.2838	192	0.742**	0.000

Correlation is significant at 0.05\*\*

Table 3 indicated that Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics showed that significant relationship exists between psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. Reasons being that the calculated p-value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. This shows that the higher the psychological well-being, the higher the academic outcome. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria is hereby rejected.

### Discussion of the findings

The finding of this study revealed that significant relationship exists between social security and psychological well-being among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. This finding agrees with that of Simpson et al. (2021) who found that expansions in social security benefits improve mental health outcomes. Reductions in social security support lead to adverse mental health outcomes.

The finding also revealed that significant relationship exists between social security and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. This finding corroborates that of Tatiana et al. (2022) who found that the female students analyzed showed higher levels of psychological security, and especially in the communication of own ideas in webinar rooms. The same tendency was found in the levels of academic engagement and performance. The findings obtained by using the linear regression analysis technique indicated that psychological security predicted academic performance positively.

Furthermore, the finding revealed that significant relationship exists between psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West, Nigeria. This finding agrees with that of Kotzé and Kleynhans

(2013) who conducted a study on psychological well-being and resilience as predictors of first-year students' academic performance. The authors reported that students who appeared to have strong spiritual or religious convictions performed better academically than those with less religious beliefs. Students can benefit from having strong spiritual or religious pillars as well as ongoing cognitive and emotional engagement in their academic work to improve their academic performance.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that significant relationships exist between social security, psychological well-being and academic outcome among female students in colleges of education in North West Nigeria. Establishing and maintaining social security measures could potentially enhance both the psychological well-being and academic outcome of these students.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were proffered:

- i. College management should enhance campus security within and outside the college environment so as to improve the overall well-being of female students.
- ii. College management should provide a safe and supportive environment that can positively affect female students' well-being thereby enhancing their ability to focus on academics and perform better.
- iii. College management should address both academic and emotional needs; colleges can foster an environment where female students feel supported and encouraged to excel academically.

### **References**

- Ada, N. A. (2007). *Gender, Power and Politics in Nigeria*. Makurdi: Aboki Publishers.
- Assefaw, G. (2010). Girl's Education a Strategic Tool to Enhance the Role of Women in Society, *Education Horizon*, 1(1).
- Basic Education Coalition (2020). Rationale for investment in global basic education. Retrieved from <https://www.basiced.org/whyeducation>
- Bellamy, C. (2003). *Strategy for Acceleration of Girls' Education in Nigeria (SAGEN)*. Abuja, Nigeria: UNICEF Children's Fund Communication Section.
- Crone, T. (2005). Social security administration. Center for Retirement Research, Boston College, USA.
- Eze, C. U. & Eze, I. J. (2018). *An Introduction to the Teaching Profession: Ethics in the Teaching Profession*. Enugu: His Glory publications.
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Julien, D. (2018). Education for development. Retrieved from <https://www.vvob.be/en/education/ourvision-on-quality-education>
- Kotzé, M., & Kleynhans, R. (2013). Psychological well-being and resilience as predictors of first-year students' academic performance. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 23(1), 51-59.
- Kreuter, M. W. & Strecher, V. (1995). Changing inaccurate perceptions of health risk: Results from a randomised trial. *Health Psychology*, 14, 55–63. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-6133.14.1.5>
- Ocho, L. O. (2005). *Issues and Concerns in Education and Life*. Enugu: Institute of Development Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka
- Offorma, C. G. (2009). Girl-child Education in Africa. Keynote address presented at the Conference of University Women of Africa Held in Lagos, Nigeria, 16th-19th July, 2009.
- Okafor, F. C. (2016). *Philosophy of Education and Third World Perspective*. Port Harcourt: Odumeze Kris and company.
- Public Opinion Fund (2013). Deficit bezopasnosti [Security Deficit]. Otechestvennyezapiski [Home Proceedings], 2(53). Retrieved from: <http://www.strana-oz.ru/2013/2/deficit-bezopasnosti>
- Simpson, J., Albani, V., Bell, Z., Bamba, C. & Brown, H. (2021). Effects of social security policy reforms on mental health and inequalities: A systematic review of observational studies in high-income countries. *Social science & medicine*, 272, 113717.
- Slovic, P., Fischhoff, B., & Lichtenstein, S. (1976). Cognitive processes and social risk-taking. In J. S. Carroll & J. W. Payne (Eds.), *Cognitive and Social Behavior*, 165–184. Potomac, MD: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Tatiana, B., Kobicheva, A. & Tokareva, E. (2022). The relationship between students' psychological security level, academic engagement and performance variables in the digital educational environment. *Education Information Technology*, 27, 9385–9399.
- Tyoakaa, L. M, Ifeanyichukwu, J. A. & Apine, N. (2014). Problems and Challenges of Girl-Child Education in Nigeria: The Situation of Kalgo Local Government Area (L.G.A) of Kebbi State. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 4(4), 1-05.
- Udungwomen, A. F. (2004). The Philosophy of Education for Nigerian Women: Problem and Prospects. The African Symposium. Retrieved from <http://www.saga.cornell.edu/saga/educconf/okpukpara.pdf>

- UNICEF (2004). *The State of the World's Children: Girls Education and Development*.  
UNICEF, (2003). *Girls Education Progress Analysis and Achievement in 2002, Medium–  
Term Strategic Plan 2002–2005*. New York: UNICEF.
- Vanguard Newsreport (2011). Nigeria: UN Quality of Life Index - Nigeria Placed 156.  
Retrieved from <https://allafrica.com/stories/201111021225.html>.

### **Acknowledgement**

The research work was supported by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), Federal Republic of Nigeria. It was financially supported by IBR TETFund Research Project (Batch-10 2024).