

## Family type and family size as correlates of parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education in Tertiary Institutions in Delta State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

The study investigated Family type and Family size as correlates of parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education amongst female students in public tertiary institutions in Delta state, Nigeria. Two research aims, with their corresponding advantages were raised and tested at 0.05 alpha levels. Correlational survey design was used with a population was ten thousand five hundred and thirty-six (10,536) female students from three (3) public tertiary institutions, with a sample of 250 female students. The multistage sampling technique was adopted and a questionnaire titled "Family Types, Family size and Socioeconomic Status Questionnaire" (FTFTSSQ) adapted from Ofuani (2013), was used as the instrument and it consisted of three sections, A, B and C, with reliability coefficient of .88. The hypothesis was analysed using linear regression. The results indicated that Family type significantly predicts parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education. However, family size, does not significantly predict parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State. It was concluded that Family type significantly predicts parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education; while, family size does not significantly predict parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education. Among the recommendations was that smaller family be encouraged, such as monogamy so as to allow the flow of scarce resources in pursuing the girl-child education in tertiary institutions and also, there was need for smaller family size, as larger family size was perceived to negate a child's outcomes due to scarce resources.

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## INTRODUCTION

The lives of women worldwide, has been greatly influenced by the current wave of globalization especially those in the developing world. However, in many areas of life, including employment, health, education and civil rights women are still lacking behind. With a lot of factors, like home, community and school based restricting female education (Uremu, 2012). World Bank, 2010 report by the World Bank, for instance, Nigeria's female adult literacy rate was 59.4% compared to 74.4% for males (World Bank, 2010). This disparity dates to the

inception of formal education in Nigeria. For example, before 1920, education was controlled by Christian organizations, in which twenty two out of the twenty-five secondary schools established were for boy and girls were had only three (Ogunyemi, 2015). The Girl Child has been deprived of education and while been given out to marriage early and as such deprived of the competences for community development (Adamu, 2005). Girl-child education has given rise to diverse career opportunities and in society today, there have been tremendous achievements and breakthroughs because of this; however, observations have shown that the girl child still have inadequate access educational participation, with poor performance subjects like Mathematics and other Science subjects (Oke, 2000; Oladosu in Lawal, 2008).

Family type refers to the pattern or structure present in one's family which influences the dynamics and manner by which it operates. The classification of marriage is tripartite in nature i.e. Monogamous, Polygamous and Polyandrous families (Sociology Guide, 2021). Monogamous family is that in which an individual has only one partner during their life's time or at any one time (serial monogamy), while Polygamous family is a marriage with two or more partners i.e. involving multiple spouses" (Al-Krenawi, 2001), research has shown it has negative outcomes on wives' and child health outcomes (Hassouneh-Phillips 2001). According to Kramer (2020), polygamy is only practiced by 2% of the world population, which is predominate among the Western and Central Africans, with Burkina Faso the highest spread of (36%) and often found among person practicing folk religions (45%), Muslims (40%), and Christians (24%). With resent study showing offspring born out of polygamy are subject to emotional and physical abuse as a result of parental neglect and abuse (Rose Chen Siew & Siti Aishah, 2020). In Nigeria polygamy was prompted due to the occupation which were farming and hunting and the children were used in farming but with the resent economic realities and the practice tends to subside but for those in the villages. Evidence in literature concerning the girl child and young adults has proven that polygamy lead to abuse emotionally among their daughters as a result of what they have seen their mother's experienced and pain bare due to second marriage; which may result in diverse problems such as low academic in achievement, mental health problems and social problems when compared to children from monogamous homes (Al-Sharf., Pfefer & Miller, 2016). Studies have explored the correlation between family types and girl-child education and various observations and revelations have been made concerning the topic of interest. In assessing the role family type plays in determining girl-child education, study by Odimegwu, Somefun and Akinyemi (2017) showed Family structure predicted the educational outcomes of youths, with gender showing a significant difference. Subsequently, Amoateng, Heaton and Mcalmont (2017) employed Multilevel Modelling in analysing data, while examining family structure on children's schooling in sub-Saharan Africa

and its effect. Using recent Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) in 26 African Countries, its findings revealed that the presence of a husband in the home and polygyny had an adverse effect on children's education. It also revealed that females are likely to have lower educational attainment when compared to males, mostly those from or in polygynous families. Female or the girl-child education in particular was recommended and to be encouraged, so as to create exposure and reduce the bias in favour of boys' education, practices of polygyny and negative cultural attitudes.

Family size literally means the number of person in the family and this mainly accounts for the experiences and resources a child will get, which in turn determine their level of development. Family size positively relates with socioeconomic status and also inversely related to the number of persons in a family. Meaning when the number of persons in a family increases, there is a reduction in the resources to be shared. Empirical in evidence literature relating to educational attainment of children with respect to birth order and family size showed that family size negatively correlated between children's education, however, when indicators like birth order or twin births as an instrument, family size effects was observed to be negligible" (Black, Devereux & Salvanes, 2005). Stone (2012) revealed that under nourished, with shows signs of insufficient rest, illness, and often display negative attitude towards school are from single homes, according to the researcher these signs begins in infancy and these can affect achievement and performance negatively. Lending credence to the aforementioned, Bysenk and Locksoh (2011), stated that children from smaller homes can express themselves easily in the classroom since they are mostly extroverted and as such they adjust more easily to school environment with greater academic performance, while children from larger families have lower levels of education and also perform poorly in academics because children of larger family size are often introverted (Booth and Kee, 2006). However, some school of thought are of the view that the academic attainment of children is a product of the money from parents and corresponding effect of time i.e. children would receive lesser resource dilution, attention and inputs which are not just only money with increase in the number of children in the family (Powell and Stellman, 2010; Van-Ejick and DeGraaf, 2012).

The relationship between the quality of a child and family size and with reference to educational outcomes, has been of interest to economists' overtime (Black et al., 2005; Lee, 2006; Qian, 2013). Evidence exist in literature about family size and its influence of on students' academics (Odok 2013), with higher educational attainment linked to small family sizes (Odok, 2013 and Eamon, 2005). Difficulty exist in maintaining families that are large in number, as they create some identified challenges such as inadequate attention and disciplinary problems for children, malnutrition, insufficient funds, poor clothing and often have a higher

chance of rowdiness which in turn does not create convenience for learning and impact their academic performance adversely; as they are prone to receiving half-baked or inadequate education as a result of the large families, and at the are likely to form large families themselves thus repeating the vicus circle while making their offspring disadvantaged academically (Murphy and Knudsen 2002; Kolk 2014). Family size as a variable impacts the outcome of children's education in two ways, which are the "dilution effect," this takes place when dilution of parental resources being allocated to each child occurs as a result of increase in the number of children (Black et al., 2005; Lee, 2006). Social scientists are of the view that an inverse relationship exist between socio-economic status and family size which shows the relationship that exist between the quality and quantity of children i.e. the lower once socio-economic status becomes with an increase in the number of children (Argys and Averett, 2015). In addition to the aforementioned, children have lower levels of education and also perform poorly in academics when they come from larger families (Booth and Kee, 2006). Other researchers like Powell and Stellman, (2010); Van-Ejick and DeGraaf, (2012) are of the view that children educational attainments are products of time and money from their parents and other essential things like attention, resource dilution and not necessarily family size. However, evidence also exist in literature that suggest that children raised in large families are not educational disadvantage (see e.g. Angrist et al. 2010; de Haan 2010).

In another related study by Dunga and Mafini (2019) in Zomba Malawi which examined the socio-economic factors like household and school-related factors such as distance to school and the availability of resources at school level which influences the education of the girl child, it was observed that despite the implementation of several interventions to reverse this trend as observed in developing countries, girls still lag behind boys. Further revelation showed that a higher percentage of girls when compared to boys, were out of school and a higher percentage of girls that dropped out of school, while distance to school, household income and water points as well as a host of other household issues acted as determinants of the girls' participation education.

### **Objective of the study:**

The objective of the study was to access family type and family size as correlates of parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education in tertiary institutions in Delta state, Nigeria.

### **Research Aims**

1. Does family type relate to parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State?

2. Does family size relate to parents’/guardians’ disposition towards girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State?

### Research Advantages

1. Family type do not significantly relate to parents’/guardians’ disposition towards girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State.
2. Family size do not significantly relate to parents’/guardians’ disposition towards girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

### METHOD

Correlational survey research design was adopted. It deemed most appropriate because it seeks to discover if any relationships exist between two or more variables in a study. One dependent variable; parents’/guardians’ disposition towards girl-child education and the independent variables family type and family size were involved in the study.

### Participants

The population of this study consisted of ten thousand five hundred and thirty-six (10,536) female students from three (3) public tertiary institutions in Delta State. The sample size of the study consisted of 250 female students in tertiary institutions in Delta State. The multistage sampling technique was adopted for this study. **Stage 1:** Firstly, three public tertiary institutions in Delta State were purposively selected by the researcher for the study. The tertiary institutions include one university, one polytechnic and one college of education. **Stage 2:** Secondly, four faculties in the university were purposively selected by the researcher including physical sciences, life sciences, arts and education from which four departments were randomly selected and questionnaires administered. The same process was applied in both the polytechnic and the college of education.

**Table 1:**

**Table Head:** Descriptive of Sample of Female Undergraduate in Three Public Tertiary Institutions in Delta State

<i>Type of Tertiary institution</i>	<i>Number sampled</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
College of Education	50	21.4
Polytechnic	102	43.6
University	82	35.0
Total	234	100.0

### Instrument

The questionnaire titled "Family Types, Family size and Socioeconomic Status Questionnaire" (FTFTSSQ) adapted from Ofuani (2013) was the instrument used. It consisted of three sections, A, B and C, with reliability coefficient of .88. Finally, data was analysed using Point - Biserial Correlation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Hypothesis One:** Family type does not significantly relate to parents /guardian’s disposition towards the girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

**Table 2:**

**Table Head:** Descriptive of Family Type and Parent/Guardian Disposition towards Girl Child Education

<i>Family Type</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Nuclear	143	61.1	61.1
Polygamous	45	19.2	80.3
Single Parenting	28	12.0	92.3
Extended	18	7.7	100.0
Total	234	100.0	

Table 2 shows that 143 representing 61.1% of the undergraduate female student’s participant are from nuclear. 45 representing 19.2% of the undergraduate female student’s participant were polygamous family. 28 representing 12.0% of the undergraduate female student’s participant were from single parenting family while 18 representing 7.7% of the undergraduate female student’s participant were from extended family. This implies that majority of the student participants are from Nuclear family.

**Table 3:**

**Table Head:** Point - Biserial Correlation of Family Type and Parent/Guardian Disposition towards Girl Child Education

<i>Variable</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
Family Type	234	-.205	.002
Girl – child Education			

$P= 0.05$

Table 3 shows the point – biserial correlation ( $r_{pb}$ ) value of – 0.205 and is significant at  $p = .002$ . This indicates a negative correlation between family type and Girl – child Education in tertiary institutions in Delta State. Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that Family type does not significantly relates to parents /guardians’ disposition towards the girl- child

education in tertiary institutions in Delta State is rejected, meaning the family a girl child emanates from directly or indirectly significantly relates to parents /guardians’ disposition towards the girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

**Hypothesis Two:** Family size does not significantly relate to parents’/guardians’ disposition towards girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

**Table 4:**  
**Table Head:** Descriptive of Family Size and Parent/Guardian Disposition towards Girl Child Education

<i>Family Size</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
2-4 Members	90	38.5	38.5
5-7 Members	88	37.6	76.1
8-10 Members	33	14.1	90.2
11 and Above	23	9.8	100.0
Total	234	100.0	

Table 4 shows that 90 representing 38.5% of the undergraduate female student’s participant who belongs to the family size of 2-4 members 88 representing 37.6% of the undergraduate female student’s participant who belongs to the family size of 5-7 members 33 representing 14.1% of the undergraduate female student’s participant who belongs to the family size of 8-10 members 23 representing 9.8% of the undergraduate female student’s participant who belongs to the family size of 11 and above members. By implication, this means that the majority of undergraduate female student’s participant belongs to the family size of 2-4 members.

**Table 5:**  
**Table Head:** Point - Biserial Correlation of Family Size and Parent/Guardian Disposition towards Girl- Child Education

<i>Variable</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
Family Size			
	234	-.107	.101
Girl – child Education			

$P= 0.05$

Table 5 shows the point – biserial correlation (rpb) value of – 0.107 and is not significant at  $p = .101$ . This indicates a negative correlation between family size and Girl – child Education in tertiary institutions in Delta State. Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that Family

size does not significantly relates to parents /guardians' disposition towards the girl- child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State is retained.

## CONCLUSION

This study has provided meaningful insight into family type and family size as correlates of parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education in tertiary institutions in Delta state, Nigeria. It was concluded from the study that Family type significantly predicts parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State. However, family size, does not significantly predict parents'/guardians' disposition towards girl-child education in tertiary institutions in Delta State. However, this study was limited to Delta state in Nigeria. However, this study could be replicated in other states in different geo-political zones of the country, which the researchers could not cover, to ensure effective generalization of findings.

## Recommendations

From the findings of the study, it is recommended that smaller family be encouraged, such as monogamy so as to allow the flow of scarce resources in pursuing the girl- child education in tertiary institutions. Although family size in this study did not significantly relate to parents /guardians' disposition towards the girl- child education, there was need for smaller family size, since larger family was perceived to adversely affect a child's outcomes due to resource dilution or a lower average maturity level in the household.

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