



Barriers to Female Education and its Impact on Slow Socio-Economic Development of the Family: A Case of Africa International University

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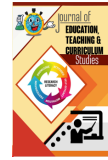


Abstract

Despite a global effort to ensure equal access to education, girls and women face difficulties accessing quality education, especially in African countries. Economic disparities, cultural norms, discriminatory attitudes, and early marriages contribute to the inability of females to access education equally as their male counterparts. Human Capital Theory holds that humans can increase their productivity with education and skills. The impact of the barriers to education among the girl-child goes beyond individual well-being because it negatively affects income growth and leads to the low socio-economic status of the family. There is an urgency to address the barriers to female education to promote sustainable economic development at the family and national levels. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was 447 female lecturers and students. Out of which, 51 were female lectures, and 396 were female students at Africa International University (AIU). With the stratified sampling technique, the sample size used in the study was 85 respondents, comprised of 20 lecturers and 65 students, which is 19% of the total population. Primary data was collected using an open-ended and closed questionnaire. The study revealed that 95.3% of the respondents are employed, and they support their families financially. The study further indicates that 74.1% believe parental discrimination is a key barrier to female education, while 72.9% believe poverty is a barrier to female education. Therefore, the study recommends a need for parental and community sensitization on eliminating barriers to female education.

Introduction

Education contributes to the development of an individual's analytical mind and reasoning ability, which aids in the formation of confidence, self-esteem, and self-respect (Wallace-Bruce, 2010). In today's society, an uneducated child is disadvantaged in terms of income, health, and opportunity. In the coming years, a society that fails to educate its children will be handicapped in terms of economic

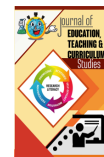


productivity and social welfare (Anderson, 1992). Female education has significant implications for the development of maternal and infant welfare. Girls' education lowers maternal and infant mortality rates and decreases fertility (Rizwana et al., 2021). Education is viewed as a major contributor to the national economic growth, self-sufficiency, and cultural reawakening of a people. Education is a fundamental human right that everyone should access regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, tribe, or socio-economic standing. According to Jama & Barre (2019), gender disparities in education, particularly in access and attainment, have been a concern for a long time. In many societies, women continue to encounter unique challenges and barriers that limit their educational opportunities and prevent them from reaching their full potential (Jama & Barre, 2019). These obstacles result from complex interactions between cultural, social, economic, and political factors, resulting in a pernicious cycle of inequality that retards socio-economic development. Throughout history, gender norms and cultural practices have reinforced traditional gender roles, assigning women and girls predominantly domestic responsibilities and undervaluing their intellectual capacity. Societal expectations and discriminatory attitudes often discourage families from investing in their daughters' education, resulting in lower enrollment and higher dropout rates among females. Early marriages, adolescent pregnancies, and detrimental gender stereotypes worsen the situation, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and inequality (Jama & Barre, 2019). This study seeks to investigate the barriers to female education and illuminate their far-reaching effects on socio-economic development. By analyzing the multifaceted nature of these obstacles, individuals gain a better understanding of their underlying causes and can devise targeted strategies to address them effectively.

A complex array of factors contributes to the problem of educational barriers for women. Social norms and cultural practices perpetuate discriminatory attitudes, devaluing the significance of girls' education and reinforcing traditional gender roles. Economic disparities and limited resources force families to prioritize the education of male children, resulting in lower enrollment and higher attrition rates for female students. Inadequate infrastructure, such as a lack of gender-responsive and safe schools, impedes access and contributes to higher absenteeism and dropout rates among female pupils. These barriers to female education have significant repercussions on socio-economic development. Women's limited access to education hinders their ability to make informed decisions regarding their health, resulting in increased maternal and infant mortality rates. In addition, women's lack of educational opportunities perpetuates income disparity and restricts their participation in the formal labor force, hindering economic development. The solution to the issue of barriers to female education requires a comprehensive strategy that addresses the underlying cultural, economic, and infrastructural obstacles. Effective interventions are required to challenge gender norms, promote gender equality, enhance school infrastructure, and provide targeted support for girls and women to access and complete their education. By understanding the complexities and consequences of these barriers, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders can develop evidence-based strategies and policies to create inclusive and equitable education systems that ensure every girl has the opportunity to learn, flourish, and contribute to the socio-economic development of nations.

Women Empowerment in the Bible

Jesus, the great teacher and role model, acknowledged the inherent equality of all people and consistently demonstrated the worth and dignity of women as individuals. Jesus regarded their fellowship, prayers, service, financial support, testimony, and witness as valuable. He thoughtfully appreciated women, taught women, and catered to women (Bøsterud, 2021). He illustrated this in three ways: First, he addressed women directly in public, which was rare at the time (John 4:27, John



4:7-26, John 8:10-11). Second, He addressed the woman with whom he had an experience. He addressed them as Abraham's daughters, giving them spiritual stature equal to that of males. Finally, Jesus did not ignore sin in the lives of the women He encountered. As seen in His interactions with the woman at the well (John 4:16-18) and the woman caught in adultery (John 8:10-11), He held women fully responsible for their wrongdoing. Jesus broke key conventions in how he saw women and their duties, presenting a new perspective on women's rights in society.

Economic and Social Benefits of Education

According to Paul (2019), education, even at the elementary level, provides living and practical skills and enables one to access critical resources to alleviate poverty. Those in certain regions of the globe who have not been exposed to modernity should be aware that women's education benefits the economy. According to recent World Bank and World Economic Forum reports, women play a crucial economic role as they become more productive citizens through education. Educated women contribute to the labor force's size, quality, and efficiency. They can obtain better-paying occupations, allowing them to support their families with daily necessities, health care, and education (The World Bank Group, 2016). According to the World Bank and the World Economic Forum, investments in female education can yield a growth premium in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) trends and closing the gender employment disparity can increase per capita income (The World Bank Group, 2016).

Barriers to Female Education

Females encounter numerous obstacles when attempting to acquire an education. Trends in inequality, traditional beliefs, poverty, early marriage, and adolescent pregnancy are examples of these obstacles. Each of these is examined in detail below.

Inequality Trends

Women play a crucial role in every society, shouldering the heaviest burdens while being the least able to appreciate the fruits of their labor. This is evident in the remarks made by former President of the United States of America, Bill Clinton, at the annual meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative. He stated, "Women perform 66% of the world's work and produce 50% of the food yet earn only 10% of the income and own 1% of the property." Whether the issue is enhancing education in the developing world, combating global climate change, or addressing virtually any other challenge, empowering women is essential (Spiker, 2019). This is especially true in African societies, where women are traditionally regarded as subhuman and attributed to inferior intelligence. Girls presently represent 48% of primary school enrollment, while boys represent 52%, as reported by the World Bank. In the last few decades, the gender disparity has narrowed, but girls still account for 55% of all out-of-school children, or 122 girls for every 100 boys out of school. Even greater disparities exist in most developing nations (Rihani et al., 2006). In Yemen, there are 270 girls for every 100 boys, while in India, there are 426 girls for every 100 boys. Women have been subjected to severe discrimination due to a lack of legal rights and limited independence from their spouses.

Despite recent progress, girls face lifelong disadvantages and exclusion in education systems. In 2013, an estimated 31 million primary school-aged females and 32 million lower secondary school-aged girls were out of school (UNICEF, 2004). Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest proportion of countries with gender parity. South and West Asia have the largest gender gap in their out-of-school population, with 80% of their out-of-school girls unlikely to ever attend school compared to only 16% of their out-of-school boys. According to present trends, it is anticipated that by 2015, 69% of countries will have achieved gender parity in primary education, and 48% will have achieved gender parity in lower secondary education (UNICEF, 2004).



In employment, males are typically deemed to earn more than females. According to a study conducted by Bardhan and Klasen (2020) in Egypt, university-educated men and women in Egypt earn different amounts. Women earn less money than men. According to them, this disparity was caused by endowment distinctions between the sexes. They argued that, despite the importance of educational opportunity equality, it is insufficient for attaining pay equality (Bardhan & Klasen, 2000).

Mati's study on the 'Effects of Household Chores on the Girl Child's Education' in Kenya revealed that 66.7% of respondents agreed with the phrase "a woman's place is in the kitchen," indicating where the value of women and girls is relegated. If a female child is not interested in school, 46.7% of respondents concurred that she should assist with household chores. Despite the level of education, 46.7% of the community surveyed believed that a married woman is more valuable to society than an adolescent. According to Mati's findings, 36.7% favored secondary education as the highest level of education females should attain, while 26.7% favored university education. Mati (2015) found that 86.7% of the community supported the notion of girls staying at home instead of attending school to assist with and learn household chores because, regardless of their level of education, they would wind up in the kitchen. Although this mentality is still prevalent in some nations, the international community is trying to eradicate it. Women are encouraged to enroll in and pursue courses from various programs to empower themselves. Currently, women hold administrative positions of prominence and are held in high regard.

Traditional Beliefs

Traditional beliefs are strong feelings, customs, or ways of doing things that have existed for a long time among a specific group of people and have been handed down from generation to generation without being challenged. They consist of ethical or moral beliefs about how people should live and interact with others. Here is an example of a prenatal moral conviction held by Lindsey regarding boys and girls:

From the moment, a girl infant is wrapped in a pink blanket and a boy infant in a blue one, gender role development begins. The colors of pink and blue are among the first indicators used by society to distinguish female from male. As this infant grows, other cultural artifacts will assure that this distinction remains intact. Girls will be given dolls to diaper and tiny stoves on which to cook pretend meals. Boys will construct building with miniature tools and wage war with toys and tank. The incredible power of gender socialization is largely responsible for such behaviors. Pink and blue begin this lifelong process (Bayisenge, 2013, p. 39).

Gender roles are acquired throughout infancy and adulthood. The family, schools, institutions, media, tradition, and culture all contribute to reinforcing and discouraging certain behaviors in boys and girls. In a given social context, the gender roles of boys and girls may be flexible or inflexible, similar or distinct, and complementary or contradictory (Kabeer, 2003). Consequently, there are gender disparities and gaps that are not simply male-female gaps because they are not based on biology. There are gaps between boys and girls due to their distinct roles and social locations. This implies that the relationships between men and women are social and, therefore, not fixed.

Bayisenge (2013) indicates that most of the time, sociocultural approaches and customs govern the position of girls and women in society. The traditional role of a woman is within the household. Due to the expectation that girls will eventually marry and become housewives; mothers consider what



their daughters learn at home to be at least as important as what they learn at school. As girls mature and acquire household skills and behaviors that prepare them for their future roles as wives and mothers, tradition dictates that they remain close to their mothers. These sociocultural perspectives portray girls' formal education as a departure from established communal norms and practices. Formal education is frequently viewed as unsuitable for females and, as a result, is not cherished or valued. Cultural attitudes are so ingrained that even school-aged girls believe they need only to learn how to cook. Some African traditions believe that girls are born for males, and cooking and housekeeping skills are sufficient for women (Bayisenge, 2013).

Poverty

Girls' educational opportunities are hampered by their poverty status. Children of school-going age who are not enrolled in school are associated with poverty at the national and household levels (Bayisenge, 2013). In states where fewer children of either gender attend school, shortages of schools and low school quality continue to be significant issues. At the domestic level, the direct cost of educating a child is the most cited reason why children are not sent to school. In many countries, particularly those in Africa, education is ostensibly free, but parents must pay informal fees for compulsory items such as uniforms, books, pens, extra lessons, exam fees, and funds to support school buildings. In other places, the lack of functioning public schools forces parents to send their children to private schools that, despite being technically affordable, are unaffordable for the poorest families, who risk becoming destitute to provide their children with a better life through education.

In addition, the impact of starvation on children in education systems as a cause of poverty is grossly under-reported. When a child is severely malnourished, it affects brain development, resulting in slow brain development and poor school performance. By age 5, approximately 171 million children in developing countries are stunted due to malnutrition. Stunting impairs a child's cognitive abilities, concentration, and focus on school. Thus, stunted children are 19% less likely to be able to read by the age of eight (Mensch et al., 2005).

Early Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy

Early marriage has multiple negative effects on both young women and the society in which they live. It is a violation of human rights and females' rights in particular (Psaki, 2016). Early marriage has profound physical, intellectual, psychological, and emotional effects on both girls and boys, limiting their educational and employment opportunities and chances for personal development (Psaki, 2016). This study emphasizes girls more because this issue affects girls in far greater quantities and with greater intensity. UNICEF contends that girls and society bear the costs of child marriage. As a result of adolescent marriage and pregnancies, society will bear an increasing number of burdens, including population pressure, healthcare costs, and lost opportunities for human development (UNICEF, 2021).

Early entry into marriage and pregnancy impedes adolescent girls' access to and continuation of education. In many cultures, school attendance is frequently incompatible with the responsibilities and expectations of marriage and motherhood (Mensch et al., 2005). Economic progress cannot be achieved if the girl child is not given the opportunity to receive an education. Early marriage unquestionably denies school-age children the right to an education that would promote their personal growth, provide the foundation for adulthood, and contribute to the future comfort of their family and community.

Women should be granted education because they facilitate and assure the fulfilment of other human rights. For several impoverished, desperately low-income families, the prospective benefits of



educating daughters are viewed as distant, and their education is not an investment reward. Families believe that a girl's education will benefit her husband's family, not her own. In addition, some parents believe that girls do not need an education to fulfil their duties as wives and mothers, that education undermines cultural practices, and that it teaches girls to reject tradition. Otoo-Oyorley & Pobi (2003) stated in this regard:

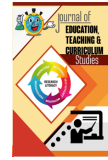
At the age of about 14 years, my father sent me to my uncle so that he could let his wife train me for marriage. He believes that if I continued to go to school, I would be a spoilt girl and no man would agree to marry me. Being spoilt girl meant that I would be too wise to marry back in his village where he could get my dowry (Otoo-Oyorley & Pobi, 2003, p. 29).

For over 50 years, governments worldwide have reaffirmed everyone has the right to an education. The Millennium Development Goals were most recently adopted by the 191 United Nations members in 2000. However, according to UNICEF (2004), 62 million girls are among the 115 million children still denied this right. Marriage need not imply that a girl's or boy's education ends, but in many societies, it does because of the views of parents, schools, and spouses. Young wives frequently have older husbands who want them to uphold tradition, stay home, and care for the home and children. Due to customs and the power of their husbands, married women are not permitted to attend school. Even if they were allowed to return, a girl might find it too challenging to balance her responsibilities as a wife and mother with attending school due to the rules, timetables, and physical atmosphere of the school. Girls' sense of security and self-confidence can be further undermined by bullying and harassment from teachers, students, and other parents, leading them to stop attending school (Otoo-Oyorley & Pobi, 2003).

The community and future generations are negatively impacted when girls leave school to be married. The World Bank (2017), reports that the early marriages lead to an economic loss of the society since economic productivity of females who drop out of school to be married is curtailed. Evidence suggests that children of young, uneducated moms are less likely to start their education, perform well in school, or complete their education past the required number of years. Their daughters are more likely to drop out of school, get married early, and start the cycle of poverty again (Mathur et al., 2003).

Early Marriage as a Developmental Challenge

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) directly oppose early marriage (Salsavira et al., 2021). The first six goals, which are to end extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal education, advance gender equality and empower women, decrease child mortality, enhance maternal health, and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, are in danger of being attained (UNESCO, 2019). Examining the connection between age at marriage and development reveals that later marriage is necessary for achieving desired development-related goals. Getting married later may help people finish school, get training for a job, and have the knowledge and skills necessary for being a successful adult (Salsavira et al., 2021). Child marriage and poverty are often related in different nations. It disproportionately impacts the population's poorest members and perpetuates poverty cycles. When low-income families decide to have many children while having little money to support them, the poverty trap transforms into a demographic trap. The increased costs that society bears due to early marriage include



population pressure, health care expenses, and missed possibilities for human development (Clark et al., 2006).

Additionally, early marriage undermines international initiatives to alleviate poverty in emerging nations. The widespread practice of child marriage makes it harder for families to escape poverty in the developing world, undermining serious international commitment to combating poverty, HIV/ AIDS, and development challenges (UNESCO, 2019).

One way to combat poverty and developmental issues is through educating girls. With education, females are free to select their futures rather than having them predetermined by their parents and legal guardians. According to Salsavira et al. (2021), adult wages and postponed marriage have a strong correlation. Increased educational attainment is crucial for women's economic future and their capacity to participate in and contribute to the global economy, but this is unattainable for girls who are married off at a young age. Women who marry young are more prone to prioritize surviving and dealing with life's challenges over other aspects of their development, including formal education, preparation for employment, work experience, and personal development (The World Bank, 2017). Therefore, communities trying to improve education levels and end the cycle of poverty may find it difficult to overcome early marriage.

Limitations of Impact

In some circumstances, the impact of women's education on development is less significant. In locations with significant poverty levels, the socio-economic impact on families and the advantages of investing in women are much smaller (Syomwene & Kindiki, 2015). Additionally, in some instances, women's education is of considerably poorer quality than that of men, which lessens its efficacy. The so-called hidden curriculum in schools, which reinforces particular ideals, can accompany this issue. The emphasis on boys' superiority can lead educated women to forgo marketable training in favor of typically female vocations that pay less poorly, with negative economic and societal repercussions (Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 2002). Investing in sons is more useful to parents in civilizations where women are married off and depart the family while men remain and care for their parents.

Additionally, some African society believes investing in a boy's education is more advantageous than a girl's because a boy who leaves school early is more likely to benefit the family than a girl who leaves school at the same grade level (Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 2002). This encourages families who only intend to enroll their kids in primary school to prioritize investing in the education of their sons above that of their daughters. Socially, gender roles may hamper women's education's potential to advance gender equality. This is especially true in cultures where education for women is only valued as a way to produce more desirable wives. While there is little debate on the pure economic advantages, there is some disagreement regarding how to assess the social benefits and some variation between research (Patrinos & Psacharopoulos, 2002).

Method

This section describes the procedures of gathering and analysing data for this study that gears towards investigating barriers to female education and its impact on slow socio-economic development of the family. It discusses the methods, designs and procedures that were used to conduct the inquiry.

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive survey design. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), a descriptive survey design is appropriate for providing an accurate, descriptive analysis of the



characteristics of the sample from the population. Consequently, the study design was significant because the data acquired from the large group included a description of their attitudes and actual experiences regarding the impact of the educated girl child on the socio-economic development of the family as perceived by female students and staff. It was anticipated that the design would increase knowledge of barriers to female education and their impact on the socio-economic development of the family.

Study Population

The research population for this study totaled 447 female lecturers and female students combined at Africa International University (AIU) for the 2016/2017 academic year. Africa International University has females who serve in various roles in the institution. Thus, the population of this study includes presently enrolled female students and female lecturers at Africa International University. The students and lecturers in this study were taken from various countries.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) defined sampling as a process or technique of choosing a sub-group from a population to participate in a study. It is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected. The researchers used the published list of students' names from each program from the records office. The researchers gathered a sample size of 19% of the total research population, where 85 out of the 447 were selected. This enabled the researchers to gather sufficient data on the impact of educated females on the development of the family. The stratified sampling method was used to obtain this sample from the study's total population. This was done considering marital status, family size, responsibility, age, and residential status. Based upon the above-described sample selection criterion, the researchers selected 20 participants from the lecturers and 65 from the female students, as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Size

Category	Population Size	Sample Size
Female Lecturers	51	20
Female Students	396	65
Total	447	85

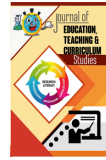
Source: Field Data

Data Collection

Questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The researchers provided a consent form which the respondents signed before filing the questionnaire. The questionnaire aimed to enquire the participants' level of education, employment status, their thought on the benefits of female education, and how they can rate the barriers to female education. This consent form demonstrated the respondents' willingness to participate in the research. It also reaffirmed their understanding of the research to be carried out by the researchers, an opportunity to ask questions, and an opportunity to withdraw from the research.

Results

The first part of the research focused on the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Tables 2 and 3 looked at their education and employment status inclusively, considering that the 20 lecturers were already employed while some students were employed before they left for studies at AIU.

***The Highest School Grade/Level Completed by Respondents****Table 2: The Highest School Grade/Level Completed by the Respondents*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Senior Secondary	8	9.4	9.4	9.4
Certificate	5	5.9	5.9	15.3
Diploma	10	11.8	11.8	27.1
Valid Bachelor	29	34.1	34.1	61.2
Masters	24	28.2	28.2	89.4
Doctorate	9	10.6	10.6	100.0
Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data

As indicated in Table 2, all respondents were educated, ranging from senior secondary school level to doctorate level. Notwithstanding, the bachelor level had the highest frequency of respondents (29), making up 34.1% of the respondents. This level was followed by the masters's level with 24 respondents (28.2%). Then diploma respondents were 10 (11.8%). There were 9 respondents with doctorate level degrees representing 10.6%, senior secondary school leaving students were 8, which is 9.4%, and the least was the certificate students, who were 5 forming 5.9% of the respondents. The level of education is crucial because it helps assess the impact of educational attainment on women and determine if there are employment opportunities for educated women.

Employment Status*Table 3: Respondent Employed or not?*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	4	4.7	4.7	4.7
Valid Yes	81	95.3	95.3	100.0
Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data

From Table 3, out of the 85 (100%) respondents, 4 (4.7%) have not been employed, while 81 (95.3%) of them are employed or have been employed. Their employment was based on their education. Meaning almost every educated female can earn her living and support her family and extended family if she can complete her studies.



Table 4: Relationship between the Socio-Economic Development of the Family and Female Education

NO	SOCIO-ECO BENEFITS	RESPONSE		RATE				
		YES	NO	NOT AT ALL	SLIGHTLY	MODERATELY	STRONGLY	TOTAL
1	Financial Support	81 (95.3%)	4 (4.7%)	4 (4.7%)	11 (12.9%)	43 (50.6%)	27 (31.8%)	85 (100%)
2	Pay Health Bills	81 (95.3%)	4 (4.7%)	4 (4.7%)	15 (17.6%)	36 (42.4%)	30 (35.3%)	85 (100%)
3	Frequent Communication	81 (95.3%)	4 (4.7%)	4 (4.7%)	11 (12.9%)	40 (47.1%)	30 (35.3%)	85 (100%)
4	Visit Parents Frequently	81 (95.3%)	4 (4.7%)	4 (4.7%)	13 (15.3%)	20 (23.5%)	48 (56.5%)	85 (100%)
5	Children Doing Well in School	81 (95.3%)	4 (4.7%)	4 (4.7%)	12 (14.1%)	42 (49.4%)	27 (31.8%)	85 (100%)
6	Support Husband	81 (95.3%)	4 (4.7%)	4 (4.7%)	11 (12.9%)	34 (40%)	36 (42.4%)	85 (100%)
7	Male Child(ren) Support	49 (57.6%)	36 (42.4%)	36 (42.4%)	33 (38.8%)	15 (17.6%)	1 (1.2%)	85 (100%)
8	Female Child(ren) Support	61 (71.8%)	24 (28.2%)	24 (28.2%)	10 (11.8%)	27 (31.8%)	24 (28.2%)	85 (100%)

Source: Field Data

Table 4 shows the results gathered on the socio-economic benefits of respondents' parents' families because of the education of their girl children. This table is in two folds. First, it examines the extent the respondents make their parents' family enjoy those outlined benefits. If they are, the second aspect rates to what extent they were making it happen. In the first aspect, 95.3% of the 85 respondents acknowledged that they support their families financially by paying their health bills, frequently communicating with them, frequently visiting them, supporting their husbands in caring for the home and having children doing well in school. The other 4.7% said they have not been supportive in the above-mentioned areas. This percentage, however, coincided with those who said they had not been working before. Regarding their male child(ren) support, 57.6 of respondents indicate that they have children who have completed schooling and are supporting them, while 42.4% reported having children who have completed schooling but are not supporting them. In terms of female child(ren) support, 71.8% of respondents indicated that they have female children who have completed schooling and are supporting them, compared to 28.2% of respondents reporting that they have female children who have completed schooling but are not supporting them.

Concerning the extent of the support for each of the above-mentioned benefits, 4.7% reported not financially supporting their parents, 12.9% indicated slightly supporting, 50.6% moderately



supported, and 31.8% strongly supporting their parents financially. With regards to supporting parents in paying medical bills, 4.7% do not support in that direction at all, 17.6% do so slightly, 42.4% moderately, and 35.3% strongly support. In terms of communication, 12.9% slightly had frequent communication with their parents, 47.1% had moderately, and 35.3% strongly stayed in touch with their parents. The benefit of parents being visited frequently, 15.3% did so slightly, while 23.5% moderately and 56.5% strongly. Considering children's performance in school 14.1% have children slightly doing well, 49.4% moderately, while 31.8% have children strongly doing well in school. With regards to support to husbands in running the home, 12.9% support slightly, while 40% support moderately and 42.4% support strongly. In view of support received from children, 42.4% are not supported by their male children though they have completed schooling and are now employed, 38.8% are slightly supported, 17.6% moderately, and 1.2% are strongly supported by their educated boy children. Finally, 28.2% of the respondents do not receive support from female children mainly because they do not have such children, while 11.8% received support but slightly, 31.8% moderately, and 28.2% strongly.

Figure 1: Barriers to Female Education

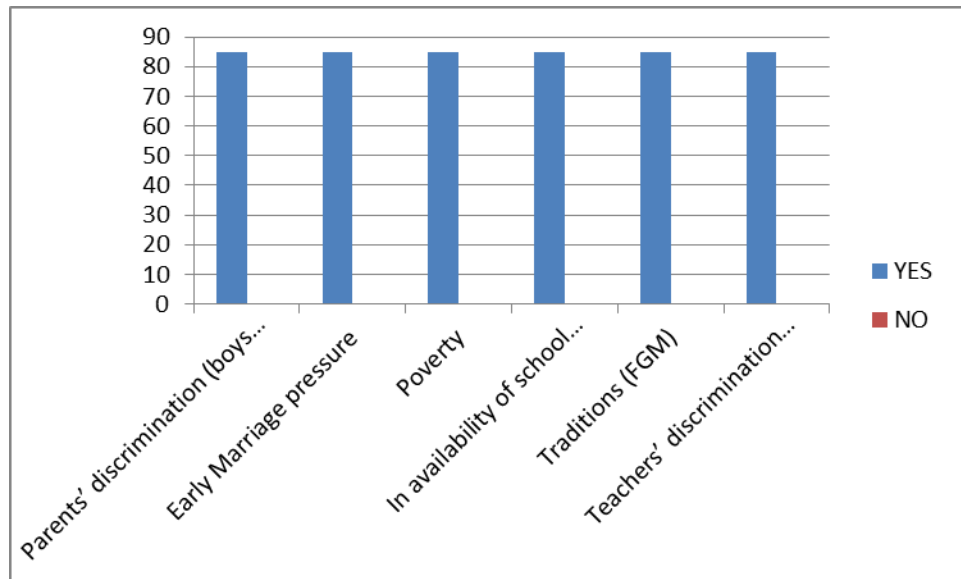


Figure 1 presents responses from the 85 respondents for this study. All respondents (100%) agreed that parental discrimination, early marriage pressure, poverty, unavailability of school, tradition, and teachers' discrimination are key barriers to the enhancement of the education of the girl child.



Table 5: Rating the Barriers to Female Education

NO	BARRIERS	NOT AT ALL	SLIGHTLY	MODERATELY	STRONGLY	TOTAL
1	Parents Discrimination	0(0%)	0(0%)	22(25.9%)	63(74.1%)	85(100%)
2	Early Marriage Pressure	0(0%)	0(0%)	26(30.6%)	59(69.4%)	85(100%)
3	Poverty	0(0%)	0(0%)	23(27.1%)	62(72.9%)	85(100%)
4	In-availability of School Facilities	0(0%)	1(1.2%)	26(30.6%)	58(68.2%)	85(100%)
5	Tradition (FGM)	0(0%)	0(0%)	24(28.2%)	61(71.8%)	85(100%)
6	Teacher's Discrimination	0(0%)	0(0%)	23(27.1%)	62(72.9%)	85(100%)
		0	1	144	365	510

Source: Field Data

Barriers to female education were considered, and the leading barrier was Parental Discrimination. In Table 5, it can be deduced that 63 (74.1%) considered this as a strong impediment to the education of the girl child, 22 (25.9%) considered it as a moderate impediment, while none of the respondents took it as a slight or non-impediment at all. In addition, 59 (69.4%) of the respondents considered early marriage pressures moderate, while 0 (0%) considered it either slight or not an issue at all. Poverty is considered by 62 (72.9%) as a very strong barrier to girl child education, while 23 (27.1%) considered it as moderate. None (0%) of the respondents considered it as either not a barrier or a slight barrier. "In availability of school Facilities," no respondent (0%) considered it a barrier, while only 1.2% considered it a slight barrier. Others considered it as a moderate (30.6%), and strong (68.2%) barrier. In response to Tradition – Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as a barrier to female education, 61 (71.8%) indicated it is a strong barrier, while 24 (28.2%) considered it as moderate. However, 0 (0%) saw it as either not a barrier at all or as a slight barrier. Finally, 62 (72.9%) indicated that "Teacher discrimination" is a strong barrier, while 23 (27.1%) stated it as a moderate barrier. Zero percent (0%) stated it as either not a barrier at all or a slight barrier.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of the educated girl child on the socio-economic development of families at Africa International University, Nairobi, Kenya. The education of the girl child is not considered significant in the African family setting. However, the girl child can become more supportive of the socio-economic development of the family. Therefore, this study investigated barriers to female education and its impact on the family's slow socio-economic development, especially in African societies. Parental discrimination, early marriage pressure, poverty, unavailability of school facilities, tradition, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and teacher discrimination were the major barriers identified. It was established that there is a direct correlation between the highlighted barriers in girl child education and the socio-economic development of families.



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