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Evaluation of Family Socio-Economic and Gender-Related Factors Influencing Pupils' Drop-Out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West, Nigeria

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Abstract
This study evaluated family socioeconomic and gender-related factors influencing pupils' drop-out on basic education enrolment in North-West Nigeria. Two objectives, research questions, and null hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 253,451 head teachers, teachers, School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) officials, and Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) officials across the seven states of North-West Nigeria. A sample of 384 respondents was selected from Kaduna, Katsina, and Zamfara States using multistage sampling. Data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire validated by three experts from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tested the hypotheses at the 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed that low family income, the cost of writing materials, household financial difficulties, and seasonal family work were perceived as socioeconomic factors associated with pupils' dropout, with a grand mean of 3.46. Gender-related factors, including domestic responsibilities, early marriage, inadequate funds for sanitary pads, pressure on boys to work, gender-role expectations, and preference for boys' education, recorded a grand mean of 3.48. The hypothesis results indicated no statistically significant differences in respondents' opinions regarding the two categories of factors. The study concluded that socioeconomic challenges and gender-related barriers are important perceived factors associated with pupils' dropout. It recommended strengthening conditional cash transfers for disadvantaged households and promoting gender equality to ensure equal educational opportunities for all pupils.

Keywords: Basic education, family socioeconomic status, gender-related factors, pupils' dropout, North-West Nigeria.

Introduction
Education is a fundamental human right and a critical instrument for individual empowerment and national development (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2019). It represents a significant investment in human capital and contributes to productivity, economic growth, social integration, and sustainable development at both individual and national levels. Consequently, the quality and accessibility of education remain important issues in Nigeria's national development agenda. Inadequate access to quality education can have far-reaching implications for the moral, civic, cultural, and economic development of society (Ogbonnia, 2020). Among the various levels of education, basic education occupies a particularly important position because it provides the foundation for literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, and the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills required for further education and meaningful participation in society. Basic education is fundamental to lifelong learning and human development (World Bank, 2020). In Nigeria, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was launched by the Federal Government on 30 September 1999 in Sokoto, Sokoto State, to expand access to education and promote the achievement of Education for All. The programme seeks to improve access to free and compulsory basic education, reduce illiteracy and ignorance, alleviate poverty, and promote national development, political awareness, and integration (Ikhaobomeh, 2021). Despite these objectives, ensuring that all school-age children enroll in school, remain in school, and complete their basic education continues to present a significant challenge. Consequently, pupils' dropout from basic education remains a major concern, particularly in parts of Northern Nigeria, where poverty, insecurity, and other social and economic challenges may constrain educational

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participation. School dropout refers to a situation in which pupils leave school before completing the prescribed level of education. It differs from non-enrolment, which occurs when school-age children do not enter the education system in the first place. Although both conditions contribute to educational exclusion, dropout directly reflects difficulties associated with retaining enrolled pupils until they complete their education. Nigeria continues to face substantial challenges in ensuring universal access to basic education, with the North-West geopolitical zone attracting particular concern because of the combined effects of socioeconomic disadvantage, insecurity, and weaknesses in educational provision. Ndanusa and Abayomi (2021) identified poverty, insecurity, inadequate policy implementation, and the marginalisation of children with disabilities among the factors contributing to the growing number of out-of-school children in Nigeria. These challenges highlight the need to examine the circumstances that influence pupils' enrolment, continued attendance, and completion of basic education. The family plays a central role in determining children's access to education and their ability to remain in school. Parents and guardians influence pupils' educational experiences through their financial contributions, attitudes towards schooling, provision of learning materials, supervision of schoolwork, and communication with teachers. Parental involvement can promote children's academic engagement and persistence by providing the necessary material, emotional, and educational support (Adebayo & Usman, 2019). According to the account attributed to UNICEF (2023), parental participation in children's education is associated with positive educational experiences and outcomes. Similarly, UNESCO (2023) highlights the importance of family social class, parental educational attainment, material deprivation, and psychosocial circumstances in shaping parental involvement in education. These factors suggest that differences in family circumstances may influence whether pupils enrol in school, attend regularly, and complete basic education.

Family socioeconomic status is an important factor that may determine pupils' educational participation and retention. It encompasses such indicators as household income, parents' educational attainment, occupational status, employment conditions, and the family's general material circumstances. Families with limited financial resources may experience difficulties providing school uniforms, textbooks, writing materials, transportation, meals, and other necessities required for effective participation in schooling. Where households face competing demands for limited resources, the direct and indirect costs of education may place considerable pressure on parents and guardians. Consequently, some pupils may experience irregular attendance, become involved in income-generating activities to support their families, or leave school before completing basic education. Adebayo and Usman (2019) associated poverty with difficulties in school enrolment and completion in some Nigerian communities. Such circumstances may perpetuate intergenerational poverty because limited educational attainment can restrict future employment opportunities and earning potential. Examining family socioeconomic status is therefore essential to understanding the conditions that may contribute to pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. In addition to socioeconomic circumstances, gender may influence pupils' educational opportunities and experiences.

Gender-related expectations, cultural practices, household responsibilities, and parental preferences may affect the extent to which boys and girls are enrolled in school and supported to complete their education. In some communities, girls may face barriers associated with early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and perceptions regarding the value of their education. Boys, on the other hand, may experience pressure to engage in paid work, commercial activities, farming, or other responsibilities intended to support household income. These circumstances may affect the two groups differently depending on the prevailing social, cultural, and economic conditions. However, gender-related patterns of dropout should not be assumed to be uniform across all communities or states. It is therefore necessary to investigate how gender relates to pupils' dropout from basic education and whether its influence varies across the North-West geopolitical zone. The relationship between family socioeconomic status and gender also deserves attention because these factors may interact in shaping educational participation. For instance, the effects of household poverty may differ according to a pupil's gender, family responsibilities, parental expectations, and the availability of educational opportunities. A family experiencing severe financial hardship may find it difficult to support all its school-age children, and decisions regarding which children continue schooling may be influenced by prevailing gender norms and household priorities. Similarly, gender-related barriers may become more pronounced when families lack the financial resources to meet educational expenses.

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Understanding these interconnected circumstances is important for developing interventions that address the specific needs of different groups of pupils rather than treating dropout as a problem arising from a single cause. The Human Capital Theory provides a relevant theoretical foundation for examining the relationship between family socioeconomic status, gender, and pupils' dropout from basic education. The theory is associated with the contributions of Schultz Theodore (1961) and Gary Becker (1964), who emphasised the role of investment in education, training, and skills development in enhancing individual productivity and economic growth. From this perspective, education equips individuals with knowledge and competencies that can improve their future employment prospects, earning potential, and contributions to society. However, pupils who leave school before completing basic education may have fewer opportunities to acquire the foundational competencies required for further learning and participation in the modern economy.

Families' socioeconomic circumstances may also influence their ability to invest in their children's education. Consequently, persistent dropout may contribute to the reproduction of poverty, reduced human capital development, and broader socioeconomic inequalities. Although the theory highlights the economic value of education, the present study also recognises that educational participation is shaped by social and gender-related circumstances that extend beyond economic considerations. Previous studies have examined different dimensions of school dropout and educational exclusion in Nigeria. Bamidele et al. (2024) evaluated the Universal Basic Education Programme and school dropout syndrome in conflict-affected areas of Northern Nigeria, focusing on programme improvement, school infrastructure, instructional materials, and pupil retention. Their findings indicated that improved infrastructure and the provision of instructional materials could contribute to reducing dropout, while teachers perceived free and compulsory basic education as a potential means of improving retention. Chinonso et al. (2022), in their study of the causes and consequences of school dropout among government secondary school students in Imo State, identified factors such as the cost of education, peer pressure, early marriage, and teenage pregnancy. The study also associated dropout with reduced aspirations and difficulties in making productive contributions to society. Similarly, Ndanusa and Abayomi (2021) examined the increasing number of out-of-school children in Nigeria and identified poverty, insecurity, inadequate policy implementation, and the marginalisation of children with disabilities as important contributing factors. Although these studies provide useful insights into the causes and consequences of educational exclusion, there remains a need for context-specific evidence on how family socioeconomic status and gender relate to pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. Some of the reviewed studies focused on secondary school students, conflict-affected communities, or the general problem of out-of-school children rather than examining the combined relationship between family socioeconomic conditions and gender and pupils' dropout from basic education across the North-West geopolitical zone. Furthermore, findings from other geopolitical zones or educational levels may not adequately explain the particular circumstances of pupils in the North-West. The present study therefore seeks to address this contextual gap by assessing the influence of family socioeconomic status and gender on pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. The study is significant because a clearer understanding of these factors could provide useful evidence for educational policymakers, school administrators, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders responsible for improving basic education. The findings may inform the development of targeted interventions, including financial support for disadvantaged families, gender-responsive educational policies, community sensitisation, and strategies for improving pupil retention and completion. Ultimately, the study seeks to contribute to efforts aimed at reducing school dropout, promoting equitable access to basic education, and strengthening the achievement of the objectives of the Universal Basic Education programme in North-West Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Pupils' dropout from basic education remains a concern in Nigeria, particularly in the North-West geopolitical zone, where socioeconomic disadvantage and gender-related barriers may limit children's access to and participation in schooling. UNICEF's Nigeria Education Fact Sheets 2023 reported that Zamfara State recorded a dropout rate of 39% at the upper secondary level, while UNICEF's education overview reported a primary-school-age female net attendance rate of 47.3% in the North-West. Although these indicators relate to different educational measures and levels, they highlight the need to investigate the factors affecting educational participation in the region. In particular, family socioeconomic status may influence parents' ability to meet educational expenses, while gender-related expectations and household responsibilities

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may affect boys' and girls' opportunities to remain in school. It is therefore necessary to investigate how family socioeconomic status and gender relate to pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. Pupils' dropout is a persistent problem in Nigeria's education system, particularly in the North-West Zone, with significant implications for educational development and national progress (NPC, 2020). Despite various efforts to address the problem, pupils' dropout remains a major challenge, necessitating a comprehensive examination of its causes and contributing factors. One of the major concerns in basic education is ensuring that pupils remain in school until they complete their education. Dropping out is a serious educational and social problem because it deprives children of the opportunity to enjoy their fundamental right to education and limits their future prospects. In North-West Nigeria, family socioeconomic factors may contribute to the increasing number of out-of-school children and pupils who discontinue their education before completion. These factors are closely linked to the socioeconomic status of families and their ability to meet children's educational and basic needs. Families with adequate financial resources are generally better positioned to pay school-related expenses, provide essential learning materials, and support their children's regular attendance and retention in school. In contrast, children from economically disadvantaged households often face poverty-related constraints, including inadequate learning materials, difficulties meeting basic needs, and pressure to engage in domestic or income-generating activities. Such challenges may prevent children from enrolling in school or force them to drop out before completing basic education. In addition to socioeconomic challenges, gender-related factors, such as traditional expectations concerning gender roles, unequal educational opportunities for boys and girls, and the disproportionate assignment of domestic responsibilities to girls, may also contribute to pupils' dropout. These factors can affect children's access to education, school attendance, retention, and successful completion of basic education. In view of these challenges, the researcher was motivated to investigate family socioeconomic and gender-related factors associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. The study also seeks to generate evidence-based recommendations that could help address these challenges, improve pupils' retention, and promote the completion of basic education.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Evaluate family socio-economic related factors in pupils' dropout on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria.
2. Evaluate the gender related factors in pupils' dropout in Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following constitute the research questions of this study:

1. To what extent does level of family socio-economic related factor cause pupils drop-out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone Nigeria?
2. How do gender-related factor cause pupils drop-out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the opinions of Head-Teachers, Teachers, School Based Management Committee (SBMC) officials and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) officials on family socio-economic related factors on pupils' drop-out from Basic Education enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents on gender-related factors on pupils' drop-out from Basic Education enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria.

Research Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The design involves collecting data from a selected sample of respondents to describe their opinions, perceptions, experiences, or characteristics concerning a particular phenomenon within a specified period. It was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to obtain information from different categories of respondents across the study area without manipulating the variables under investigation. A survey research design is a quantitative research approach that involves collecting data from participants through instruments such as questionnaires and interviews (Creswell, 2014; Fowler, 2014). The population of the study was 253,451 respondents. This comprised 21,505 head teachers, 159,605 teachers, 64,515 School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) officials,

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and 7,826 Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) officials in basic schools across the seven states of North-West Nigeria: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara (UBE, 2025). A sample size of 384 respondents was adopted based on the Research Advisors (2006) table for determining sample size. According to the table, a population within the range of 250,000 to 500,000 requires a sample of 384 respondents at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. A multistage sampling technique was employed in selecting the respondents for the study. At the first stage, three states- Kaduna, Katsina, and Zamfara were purposively selected from the seven states in the North-West geopolitical zone based on their proximity to the researcher. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants or study units are selected based on predetermined criteria or the researcher's judgement (Etikan et al., 2016). The same technique was used to select the basic schools that participated in the study. At the second stage, proportionate sampling was used to allocate the sample of 384 respondents among the selected states and the four categories of respondents. The sample comprised 66 head teachers, 192 teachers, 94 SBMC officials, and 32 LGEA officials. Proportionate sampling ensures that the sample allocated to each subgroup reflects its relative size in the population. At the third stage, simple random sampling was employed to select respondents from the identified categories. This technique gives eligible members of the relevant sampling frame an equal chance of selection, provided that the procedure is properly implemented (Emmanuel, 2013). The questionnaires were subsequently administered to the selected respondents. Data were collected using a self-developed questionnaire titled Evaluation of Family Socio-Economic and Gender-Related Factors in Pupils' Dropout from Basic Education Questionnaire (EFSGRFPDBEEQ). The instrument was developed in line with the research objectives, research questions, and hypotheses of the study. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts, A and B. Part A elicited general information about the respondents, while Part B contained two sections. Section One comprised ten items designed to obtain respondents' views on family socioeconomic factors associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. Section Two also contained ten items designed to obtain respondents' views on gender-related factors associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in the study area. The instrument contained 20 items in total. The items in both sections were structured using a modified four-point Likert rating scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Respondents were instructed to indicate their responses by ticking (✓) the option that best represented their opinions. The face and content validity of the instrument were established by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The experts were provided with copies of the questionnaire, a validation form, and the research objectives, questions, and hypotheses to guide their assessment. They examined the clarity, comprehensiveness, relevance, and appropriateness of the items in relation to the study's purpose. Their observations and recommendations were incorporated into the final version of the instrument to improve its suitability for data collection. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The mean scores summarised respondents' views on the items, while the standard deviations indicated the extent to which their responses varied. The null hypotheses were tested using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) at the 0.05 level of significance. One-way ANOVA is appropriate for comparing the mean scores of three or more independent groups on a continuous outcome variable, provided that its assumptions are reasonably satisfied. In this study, the four categories of respondents head teachers, teachers, SBMC officials, and LGEA officials were identified as the groups for comparison. The decision to reject or retain each null hypothesis was based on the probability value obtained from the analysis. Where the p-value was less than or equal to 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected; where the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One: To what extent does level of family socio-economic related factors causes pupils drop-out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone Nigeria?

Table 1: Opinions of Respondents on Family Socio-Economic Related Factors in Pupils' Drop-Out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone Nigeria

S/N	Item Statements	Categories of Respondents	SA		A		U		D		SD		M
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1		H/Teachers	15	23.4	33	51.6	0	0	7	10.9	9	14.1	3.59

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	Family's low income makes it difficult to keep children in school, thereby contributing to pupils' drop-out.	Teachers	28	14.8	93	49.2	6	3.2	34	18.0	28	14.8	3.31
		SBMC Off	26	29.5	38	43.2	3	3.4	13	14.8	8	9.1	3.69
		LGEAs Off	8	25.0	18	56.2	2	6.2	3	9.4	1	3.1	3.91
2	Cost of school writing materials affects child's ability to continue schooling which may lead to pupils'/students' drop-out from school.	H/Teachers	11	17.2	39	60.9	4	6.2	3	4.7	7	10.9	3.69
		Teachers	32	16.9	95	50.3	6	3.2	28	14.8	28	14.8	3.40
		SBMC Off	15	17.0	55	62.5	3	3.4	3	3.4	12	13.6	3.66
		LGEAs Off	6	18.8	21	65.6	3	9.4	0	0	2	6.2	3.91
3	Children drops out of school due to their families' struggles to meet basic needs, which contributes to pupils school drop-out.	H/Teachers	19	29.7	33	51.6	0	0	7	10.9	5	7.8	3.84
		Teachers	32	16.9	105	55.6	12	6.3	13	6.9	27	11.3	3.54
		SBMC Off	15	17.0	48	54.5	5	5.7	8	9.1	12	13.6	3.52
		LGEAs Off	4	12.5	22	68.8	0	0	0	0	5	18.8	3.53
4	Large family size makes it difficult to financially support all children in school, which lead to pupils'/students' drop-out.	H/Teachers	8	12.5	39	60.9	4	6.2	13	20.3	0	0	3.67
		Teachers	18	9.5	85	45.0	23	12.3	51	27.0	12	6.3	3.24
		SBMC Off	15	17.0	43	48.9	6	6.8	20	22.7	4	4.5	3.51
		LGEAs Off	8	25.0	13	40.6	2	6.2	4	12.5	5	15.6	3.47
5	Children engagement in economically domestic family work lead to pupils' drop-out from school.	H/Teachers	4	6.2	40	62.5	2	3.1	4	6.2	14	21.9	3.25
		Teachers	26	13.8	76	40.2	15	7.9	45	23.8	27	14.3	3.15
		SBMC Off	16	18.2	37	42.0	6	6.8	13	14.8	16	18.2	3.27
		LGEAs Off	4	12.5	16	50.0	5	15.6	5	15.6	2	6.2	3.46
6	Lack of financial support from the extended family affects child's schooling, which lead to pupils'/students' drop-out.	H/Teachers	12	18.8	29	45.3	5	7.8	6	9.4	12	18.8	3.36
		Teachers	48	25.4	64	33.9	12	6.3	30	15.9	35	18.5	3.32
		SBMC Off	15	17.0	39	44.3	8	9.1	7	8.0	19	21.6	3.27
		LGEAs Off	1	3.1	20	62.5	3	9.4	4	12.5	4	12.5	3.31
7	Children's dropout is influenced by sudden family	H/Teachers	10	15.6	31	48.4	2	3.1	14	21.9	7	10.9	3.36
		Teachers	41	21.7	80	42.3	14	7.4	8	4.2	46	24.3	3.37

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	financial problems, which lead to pupils'/students' drop-out.	SBMC Off	19	21.6	38	43.2	13	14.8	6	6.8	12	13.6	3.52
		LGEAs Off	13	40.6	12	37.5	1	3.1	2	6.2	4	12.5	3.88
8	Feeding problems at home affect a child's interest in schooling, which lead to pupils'/students' drop-out.	H/Teachers	6	9.4	38	59.4	5	7.8	11	17.2	4	6.2	3.48
		Teachers	51	27.0	64	33.9	15	7.9	43	22.8	16	8.5	3.48
		SBMC Off	15	17.0	43	48.9	6	6.8	20	22.7	4	4.5	3.51
		LGEAs Off	12	37.5	13	40.6	3	9.4	1	3.1	3	9.4	3.94
9	Children may drop out due to inadequate transport fare to school, which lead to pupils'/students' drop-out.	H/Teachers	8	12.5	22	34.4	2	3.1	29	45.3	3	4.7	3.05
		Teachers	23	12.3	53	28.6	15	7.9	92	48.7	6	3.2	2.96
		SBMC Off	11	12.5	24	27.3	8	9.1	43	48.9	2	2.3	2.99
		LGEAs Off	3	9.4	6	18.8	0	0	21	65.6	2	6.2	2.59
10	Seasonal family work affects child's school attendance, which lead to pupils'/students' drop-out.	H/Teachers	17	26.6	29	45.3	3	4.7	8	12.5	7	10.9	3.64
		Teachers	41	21.7	66	34.9	19	10.1	41	21.7	22	11.6	3.33
		SBMC Off	22	25.0	41	46.6	7	8.0	11	12.5	7	8.0	3.68
		LGEAs Off	6	18.8	19	59.4	1	3.1	3	9.4	3	9.4	3.69
	Grand Mean												**3.46**

Source: Field Work (2026).

The findings in Table 1, with a grand mean of 3.46, indicate that respondents generally agreed that family socioeconomic factors are associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. The major factors identified were low family income, the cost of writing materials, difficulty meeting household needs, large family size, feeding problems, and seasonal family work. Inadequate transport fare received comparatively lower ratings. Overall, the findings highlight the need for financial assistance, provision of learning materials, school feeding programmes, and community support to improve pupils' retention and completion of basic education.

Research Question Two: How do gender-related factors cause pupils' drop-out of Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria?

Table 2: Opinions of Respondents on Gender Related Factors in Pupils' Drop-Out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria

S/N	**Item Statements**	**Categories of Respondents**	**SA**		**A**		**U**		**D**		**SD**		**M**
			F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	
1	Girls drop out of school more than boys due to female inferiority in North-west Zone, Nigeria.	H/Teachers	18	28.1	20	31.2	4	6.2	9	14.1	13	20.3	3.33
		Teachers	66	34.9	69	36.5	9	4.8	19	10.1	26	13.8	3.68
		SBMC Off	36	40.9	15	17.0	2	2.3	15	17.0	20	22.7	3.36
		LGEAs Off	20	62.5	5	15.6	2	6.2	4	12.5	1	3.1	3.98
2	Domestic work affects girls' schooling, thus, bring about pupils drop-out in North-west Zone, Nigeria.	H/Teachers	20	31.2	19	29.7	1	1.6	14	21.9	10	15.6	3.39
		Teachers	55	29.1	69	36.5	11	5.8	32	16.9	32	11.6	3.60
		SBMC Off	21	23.9	30	34.1	4	4.5	18	20.5	15	17.0	3.27
		LGEAs Off	9	28.1	14	43.8	2	6.2	4	12.5	3	9.4	3.69

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3	Gender discrimination affects school attendance, thus, bring about pupils drop-out.	H/Teachers	13	20.3	16	25.0	1	1.6	27	42.2	7	10.9	3.02
		Teachers	67	35.4	51	27.6	19	10.1	32	16.9	20	10.6	3.59
		SBMC Off	23	26.1	19	21.6	2	2.3	34	38.6	10	11.4	3.13
		LGEAs Off	8	25.0	11	34.4	4	12.5	6	18.8	3	9.4	3.47
4	Girls' early marriage may lead to pupils/students drop-out of school in North west Zone, Nigeria.	H/Teachers	21	32.8	11	17.2	2	3.1	25	39.1	5	7.8	3.28
		Teachers	82	43.4	52	28.0	7	3.7	36	19.0	11	5.8	3.82
		SBMC Off	31	35.2	15	17.0	5	7.5	27	30.7	10	11.4	3.34
		LGEAs Off	5	15.6	12	37.5	3	9.4	11	34.4	1	3.1	3.28
5	Sexual harassments from teachers and students' counterpart, lead to girl child dropout from basic education.	H/Teachers	18	28.1	20	31.2	3	4.7	20	31.2	3	4.7	3.47
		Teachers	72	38.1	50	26.5	23	12.2	36	19.0	8	4.2	3.75
		SBMC Off	33	37.5	16	18.2	2	2.3	28	31.8	9	10.2	3.41
		LGEAs Off	10	31.2	7	21.9	3	9.4	10	31.2	2	6.2	3.41
6	Boys are not allowed to go to school because they are expected to provide for the family, thus, bring about pupils drop-out.	H/Teachers	0	0	50	78.1	0	0	7	10.9	7	10.9	3.45
		Teachers	10	5.3	134	70.9	2	1.1	38	20.1	5	2.6	3.56
		SBMC Off	1	1.1	59	67.0	0	0	19	21.6	9	10.2	3.27
		LGEAs Off	1	3.1	25	78.1	0	0	6	18.8	0	0	3.67
7	Lack of money to buy sanitary pads during menstruation lead to girl child dropout of school in North-west Zone, Nigeria.	H/Teachers	8	12.5	47	73.4	0	0	5	7.8	4	6.2	3.85
		Teachers	22	11.6	126	66.7	2	1.1	33	17.5	6	3.2	3.66
		SBMC Off	16	18.2	54	61.4	0	0	16	18.2	2	2.3	3.75
		LGEAs Off	8	25.0	18	56.2	1	3.1	5	15.6	0	0	3.91
8	Boys are sometimes forced into work instead of schooling, thus, bring about pupils drop-out in North-west Zone, Nigeria.	H/Teachers	8	12.5	47	73.4	0	0	5	7.8	4	6.2	3.78
		Teachers	26	13.8	122	64.6	8	4.2	28	14.8	5	2.6	4.03
		SBMC Off	16	18.2	50	56.8	0	0	15	17.0	7	8.0	3.69
		LGEAs Off	7	21.9	17	53.1	3	9.4	5	15.6	0	0	3.81
9	The community's expectations concerning gender roles affected child's education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.	H/Teachers	4	6.2	49	76.6	5	7.8	5	7.8	1	1.6	3.78
		Teachers	29	15.3	120	63.5	4	2.1	28	14.8	8	4.2	3.71
		SBMC Off	7	8.0	65	73.9	6	6.8	7	8.0	3	3.4	3.75
		LGEAs Off	6	18.8	17	53.1	3	9.4	6	18.8	0	0	3.72
10	Preferential treatment of boy child education over girl brings about pupils drop-out in	H/Teachers	9	14.1	51	79.7	1	1.6	3	4.7	0	0	4.03
		Teachers	28	14.8	131	69.3	4	2.1	22	11.6	4	2.1	3.83
		SBMC Off	19	21.6	61	69.3	4	4.5	4	4.5	0	0	4.08
		LGEAs Off	4	12.5	23	71.9	1	3.1	4	4.5	0	0	3.84

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North-west Zone, Nigeria.	
Grand Mean	**3.48**

Source: Field Work (2026).

The findings in Table 2, with a grand mean of 3.48, indicate that respondents generally agreed that gender-related factors are associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. The major factors identified include inadequate money for sanitary pads, boys being forced into work to support their families, domestic responsibilities, early marriage, sexual harassment, and preferential treatment of boys' education over girls'. The highest mean scores were recorded for preferential treatment of boys' education (3.84–4.08) and boys' involvement in work instead of schooling (3.69–4.03). Overall, the findings suggest that gender expectations, financial constraints, and unequal educational opportunities may contribute to pupils' dropout. However, the results reflect respondents' opinions and do not independently establish causal effects.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the opinions of Head-Teachers, Teachers, SBMC officials and LGEAs Officials in family socio-economic related factor on pupils' drop-out from Basic Education enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of One-Way ANOVA on the Family Socio-Economic Related Factors in Pupils' Drop-Out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria

Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio	P-Value
Between Groups	3.372	3	1.124		
				1.259	0.29
Within Groups	329.298	369	.892		
Total	**332.670**				

P<0.05

The result in Table 3 shows that the calculated F-ratio of 1.259 has a p-value of 0.29, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the opinions of head teachers, teachers, SBMC officials, and LGEA officials regarding family socioeconomic factors associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. Thus, the four categories of respondents held statistically similar opinions on the issue.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the opinions of Head-Teachers, Teachers, SBMC officials and LGEA officials on gender-related factors on pupils' drop-out from Basic Education enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria

Table 4: Summary of One-Way ANOVA on Gender Related Factors in Pupils Drop- Out on Basic Education Enrolment in North-West Zone, Nigeria

Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio	P-Value
Between Groups	.495	3	1.124		
				1.259	0.29
Within Groups	103.319	369	.892		
Total	**103.814**				

P<0.05

Table 4 indicates that the p-value of 0.29 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in the opinions of head teachers, teachers, SBMC officials, and LGEA officials regarding gender-related factors associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. This suggests that the four categories of respondents held statistically similar opinions on the issue.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that family's low income, lack of financial support from the extended family and families' struggles to meet basic needs significantly caused pupils drop-out in basic education enrolment in North-West, Nigeria. This aligns with the result of research question one, with a grand mean score of 3.46, which is higher than the instrument mean of 3.00. In line with this finding, Ndanusa and Abayomi (2021) studied fragments and causes of increasing

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out-of-school children in Nigeria and reported that factors that led to the situation were endemic insecurity, abject poverty and the marginalisation of disabled children. However, the finding disagreed with the findings of Salihu and Musa (2023), who assessed the socio-economic barriers to primary enrolment in Zamfara State and reported that poverty, household income level and transportation issues were not consistently linked to dropout, but had a relationship with increased absenteeism. Interestingly, the researchers observed that free-lunch programs in schools have a positive impact on retention that neutralises the impact of poverty.

The findings of the study revealed that frequent domestic responsibilities assigned to girls, community expectations regarding gender roles, and preferential treatment of boys' education over girls' education were perceived as factors contributing to pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. This finding is consistent with the result of Research Question Two, which recorded a grand mean of 3.48, higher than the criterion mean of 3.00, indicating general agreement among respondents regarding the influence of gender-related factors on pupils' dropout. The finding aligns with Lawal et al. (2021), who investigated cultural norms and early marriage in relation to girls' schooling in Kebbi State and found that early marriage, community pressure, and traditional expectations contributed to girls' school dropout. Similarly, Smith and Garcia (2022), in their study of household labour and school dropout in rural Peru, identified family labour demands as an important factor contributing to children's withdrawal from school, particularly when they were required to undertake agricultural and domestic activities. In addition, Obi and Eze (2022) reported that child labour contributed to primary school dropout in Ebonyi State, with girls more likely to be involved in household tasks and boys in farming and petty trading. Furthermore, Hassan and Usman (2021) found that maternal literacy was a significant predictor of pupils' school retention, while paternal literacy also had an observable, though less significant, influence. This suggests that parental education may help promote continued schooling by strengthening support for children's educational needs. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of addressing restrictive gender norms, reducing excessive domestic responsibilities, promoting equal educational opportunities for boys and girls, and improving parental awareness of the value of education. These measures may help reduce dropout and improve the retention and completion of basic education in North-West Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study concluded that low family income, inadequate financial support from extended family members, and difficulties meeting basic household needs were perceived as major socioeconomic factors associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in North-West Nigeria. The study also concluded that frequent domestic responsibilities assigned to girls, community expectations regarding gender roles, and preferential treatment of boys' education over girls' education were perceived as important gender-related factors associated with pupils' dropout from basic education in the study area.

Recommendations

In view of the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Federal Government should strengthen and expand conditional cash transfer programmes for low-income households, particularly in areas with high rates of pupils' dropout, to ease financial hardship and encourage school attendance, retention, and completion of basic education.
2. The government, school administrators, and community leaders should promote gender equality in basic education by discouraging preferential treatment of boys over girls, reducing excessive domestic responsibilities assigned to girls, and raising awareness among parents about the importance of equal educational opportunities for all children to improve school attendance and reduce dropout.

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