

## **High Rate of Female School Dropout: Implication for Women Political Participation in Nigeria**

**Ogbuagu, Anuli Regina**

*Department of Economics and Development Studies,  
Alex-Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike Ikwo, Ebonyi State*

Article DOI: 10.48028/ijprds/ijasepsm.v10.i1.01

---

### **Abstract**

---

**E**ducation empowers members of the society to function effectively in all facets of life including in political spheres. However, the standard of education is generally poor in Nigeria. It is even more worrisome when in the midst of a poor education system, many pupils and students cannot complete their academic programs. UNESCO has declared Nigeria the capital of school dropouts in the world and research has shown that the majority of these dropouts are female students. Again, Nigeria is rated low in the political participation of women. It is generally believed that there is a link between education and women's participation in politics. This study x-rays the implication of female school dropout on women's political participation in Nigeria. It employs multi-regression analysis using a neoclassical growth model with data drawn from V-med and UNESCO databases from 1980 to 2021. The result reveals that a unit increase in female school dropout rate at the primary school level (FDPRL) and female school drop-out rate in secondary schools (FDRSH) negatively and significantly reduce women's political participation in Nigeria by 0.011% and 0.021% respectively. Comparably, the female completion rate in primary schools (FCRPR) increases the political participation of women in Nigeria though at an insignificant rate of 0.0014% while the female completion rate in secondary schools (FCRSS) increases political participation of women in Nigeria significantly by 0.0062%. Policymakers at the local and global level should as a matter of urgency, double female education efforts in order to reverse the trend of female school dropouts as it will improve women's participation in politics.

**Keywords:** *School dropout, Female, Political participation, Education, Primary, Secondary school*

---

*Corresponding Author:*      **Ogbuagu, Anuli Regina**

### **Background to the Study**

Education is the fulcrum upon which human development revolves. It plays a central role in the development of any society by empowering the members of the society in all facets of life including political accomplishments (Wood 2010). According to Arowolo, Adefunke, and Adaja (2016), education is a process through which individuals become functional members of society. It provides means for individuals to acquire knowledge, realize their innate potential, and use the same for self-emancipation in society. The right to education has international acclaim and has been repeatedly upheld in several international treaties including the 1948 Convention on Rights of the Child, and the 1990 World Conference on Education for all (UNESCO 2000). Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1949 stipulates that: everyone has the right to education and shall be free and compulsory at least at elementary levels (Arowolo, et al. 2016).

Over the decades, global efforts in getting countries to embrace education as an intrinsic right of every member of the society has produced appreciable result in enrolment rates. However, a course of concern is the fact that school dropouts are on the increase. UNESCO (2011) records that enrolments into schools especially in primary and secondary schools are now in great numbers than ever before but dropout rates are significantly on the increase, especially in Nigeria. The major aim of education is to ensure that students complete their academic programs and obtain certificates to show for it. Premature withdrawal from school, therefore, is a serious threat to the future of the child, since it terminates his fundamental human right to education prematurely (UNESCO 2000; UNESCO 2011). This phenomenon is prevalent in Nigeria to an alarming degree. The school dropout phenomenon has social costs which include political apathy, increased demand for social services, increased crime rates, and poor levels of health (Azams 2007).

It is generally believed within the academia and policy actors that education rubs off positively on the political empowerment of women (Sundström, Paxton, Wang, and Lindberg 2015; Beaman, Duflo, and Topalova, 2012; Sen and Mukherjee (2014). It follows that the political empowerment of women is increasingly recognized as an important factor in the emergence of modern states, and has become high priority discourse in international development cooperation. As a result, most countries of the world have paid increased attention to women's education and liberalization. Also, policies that deny women civil liberties have been loosened up since global governance posits that a country first needs to grant civil rights if it must make progress in electoral democracy. It is argued that when women enjoy the full right to education, they are better able to voice their position on social issues, organize movements, and challenge unfavourable forces in the polity. Again, women who complete their academic programmes earn certificates that grant them access to the labour market and qualify them for political appointments which promote their preference for social policies and inclusion. It also increases the dwindling middle class; considered a major factor in democratization (Wang, Lindenfors, Sundström, Jansson, and Lindberg 2015). It, therefore, follows those countries, where women are denied their basic rights that like education, are less likely to achieve true democracy since the potential cost of redistribution through democratization, surpasses that

of repressing revolts. In addition, resistance movements by enlightened women alone are said to be stronger when they enjoy the right to resist authoritarian rule which in most cases, is a major threat to the achievement of decisions under global governance.

Nigeria's education system has gone through many reforms to evolve into a system categorized into three sections – basic education (primary to Junior Secondary with a completion rate of 9 years, post-basic/senior secondary education (3 years), and tertiary education (4 to 6 years concerning the field of study). The female dropout rate is high in the various categories. This trend spells doom for a country with strategic importance in the world. Nigeria is the capital of the black race in the world. It is Africa's most populous country and the seventh most populous country in the world. From a population of 42.5 million people at independence in 1960, Nigeria's population quadrupled to 186,988 million people in 2016 (UN projection, 2015). United Nations projects that Nigeria will become the third-largest country in the world by 2050 with over 399 million people. Having recorded non-impressive statistics in Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially MDGs on universal basic education; gender equality, and women empowerment, a concerted effort is needed at local and global governance to rewrite the ever-increasing rate of female school dropout and improve women's participation in politics in Nigeria. This is the motivation for this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

A principal concern in basic education is to ensure pupils and students stay in school until they complete their academic programs. Premature withdrawal from school is a serious problem because it denies affected individuals salient fundamental human rights and limits their involvement in the political process. Women form the bulk of the registered voters in Nigeria but their number is abysmally low in both elected and appointed positions in government (INEC 2018). Nigeria is a signatory to the Beijing Declaration of 1995 especially the affirmative action of 36% political positions for women. Sadly, Nigeria has not made any appreciable progress in the political participation of women. This is largely attributable to illiteracy on the part of women who are often used by political gladiators to achieve their (politicians) aims. As important as this discourse is, it is disappointing to note that there is a dearth of literature linking women's education to political participation in Nigeria. Existing literature concentrates on patterns of dropout, especially in primary and secondary schools (see Ogiri 2016; Arowolo, Adefunke and Adaja 2016; Ajaja, 2012; Nakpodia, 2010). None in existing literature finds answers to the effect of female school dropouts on women's political participation in Nigeria. Therefore, a study of this standing is very important as it addresses the relationship between female school dropouts and women's political participation in Nigeria. It also will arouse research interest in this regard as well as proffer remedial policy options for policymakers and stakeholders in the education sector for consideration.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study is guided by the following objectives:

- a) To examine the relationship and effects of female school dropout rate on women's political participation in Nigeria from 1980 to 2021

- b) To compare the effect of the female dropout rate on political participation of women and their counterparts who complete academic programs.

## **Literature Review**

### **Theoretical Review**

Two theoretical cases are considered here – one explaining the relationship between education and socio-political participation and the other, providing the basis for dropouts.

**Feminist Political Ecological Theory:** This is a feminist perspective on political ecology, which examines the place of gender in the political-ecological landscape, exploring gender as a factor in ecological and political relationships. Merchant (1980), Plumwood (1993), and Shiva (1989) suggest that gender is a crucial variable concerning class, race, and other relevant aspects of political life in society.

**Institutional Perspective Theory:** Developed by Russell Rumberger, focuses on school characteristics, practices, and policies. Rumberger (2004) argues that structural features of schools viz: size, available resources, and quality of access to teachers, influence dropout rates in any education system. This theory posits that much emphasis is placed on 'high-risk' youth and their families while little is said on high-risk settings in which they live. Accordingly, Russell Rumberger develops a framework based on individual perspectives and institutional perspectives. The framework suggests that the decision to stay in or to leave school is affected by multiple contextual and policy factors that interact throughout the academic life of a student especially background characteristics (i.e. gender, ethnicity/race, poverty, special education placement, and language, Poor academic foundation both in high school and in earlier grades, high absenteeism, student discipline problems, and student mobility) and a strong relationship exist between student background characteristics and dropping out of school. Students' experience while in school also accounts for importance. Students engaged in learning and social dimensions of school are less likely to terminate their programs prematurely. For instance, students may withdraw from school if they find courses extremely challenging, or because they have a poor relationship with peers and teachers (Rumberger, (2004), Allensworth and Easto (2005), Rumberger and Arellano (2008))

Also, there are other four basic theories of school dropout: Academic mediation theory, General Deviance theory, Deviant Affiliation theory, and Poor Family Socialization:

1. Academic mediation theory: looks at how poor academic achievement can influence other factors such as deviant behavior, and personal deviance and affects the relationship between school dropout and factors associated with it.
2. General Deviance theory: expound on the effect of teenager's misconduct (delinquency, drug use/abuse, and early pregnancy) can cause poor academic achievement and influence school dropout
3. Deviant Affiliation theory: explains the influence of antisocial peers for example if an individual has antisocial peers, there are tendencies of dropping out of school.
4. Poor Family socialization: Family is a fundamental institution for any child, therefore the background of the family is strongly related to the dropout rate example (poor family orientation, poor parenting, and low parental expectations)

### **Conceptual Clarification**

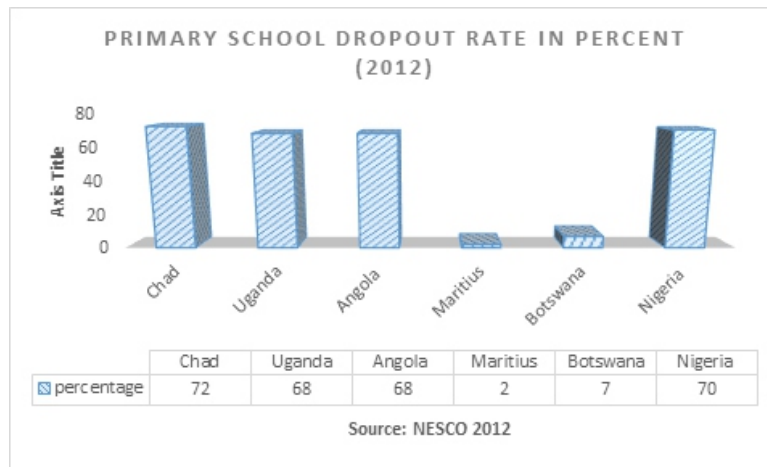
#### **Education and School Dropout**

In the words of Arowolo, et al (2016), education is simply taken to mean knowledge, enlightenment, or wisdom. They capture education as a process of teaching, training, and learning in schools and colleges for the development of knowledge and skills in order to prepare individuals to co-exist happily with others in society. In that light, education aims to equip individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, or behaviour to help members of society function effectively in a different facet of human development.

Consequently, when an individual fails to complete his academic programme at any stage of formal education, he is referred to as a dropout. According to De Witte et al (2016), "school dropout is defined as leaving education without obtaining a credential, most often a higher secondary education diploma" Again, Kara Bonnneau (2015), defines school dropout as "any student who leaves school for any reason before graduation or completion of a program of studies without transferring to another elementary or secondary school. According to Sundström et al. (2015), a school dropout is a pupil who leaves school before the completion of a school stage or leaves at some intermediate or non-terminal point of a given level of education. This is often captured as the dropout rate given as: the number of dropouts during an academic year say 2017-18 divided by the total number of students that were part of the same membership base at any time during the period. A high rate of female dropout can affect women's political participation in society. De Witte et al (2016), Kara Bonnneau (2015), CEDEFOP (2008), and EU Commission AL (2010) have associated school dropout with the ability of the pupil to leave school before completion, temporary or permanent withdrawal from an education or training program before its completion.

The issue of school dropout is a global concern especially in Africa Continent due to its increasing status, there is a steady record of school children dropout, especially at the primary school level. In Africa, UNESCO Report (2012) affirmed that 42% of African school children drop out of school before the end of primary education. The Global Education Digest reveals that the African continent has the World's highest record on the dropout rate.





**Figure 1:** UNESCO Report on Primary School Dropout

**Table 1:** Out of School Rate for Children of Primary School Age in Percentage by Sex (2017)

Country	Male	Female	Country	Male	Female
Algeria	2	2	Kenya	16	13
Angola	23	25	Liberia	58	57
Cameroon	13	16	Niger	45	54
Chad	47	53	Nigeria	30	34
Congo	4	3	South Africa	72	77
Cote D'ivoire	28	34	Uganda	14	13
Egypt	3	3	Zambia	14	12
Ghana	30	30	Zimbabwe	6	4

**Source:** UNICEF Global Database (2017)

A lot of scholars have tried to research the contributing factors to the alarming school dropout in Africa, Nakpodia (2010), Ajaja (2012), and Lockett et al (2019) concentrated on proving that there is a high and rising population of school children out of school in Nigeria and Africa, Sikulile Moyo et al (2016), De wit (2016) and Croninger and Lee (2001) emphasized on the teacher's student relationship as a strong factor that causes school dropout when negative. But also other factors can motivate children to leave school before graduation and health condition cannot be left out, in this vein: Theunisson et al (2015), De Rider et al (2013), and Asuncion et al (2016) tried finding out the health conditions and its relationship with school dropout rate.

Also, Lockett et al (2019) examined the factors that contribute to school dropout in secondary school using a descriptive and causal-comparative research design in the largest urban district of Mississippi, while Chirbong (2005), used a sample from five secondary schools in Jos North Local government of Plateau state and all found these factors include; peer group

influence, poor teacher-student relationship, lack of motivation, socioeconomic conditions, early marriage, illegal drug usage, absentee parents, home school distance among others.

### **An Overview of Women's Political Participation in Africa**

Political participation in the words of Uhlaner (2001), refers to voluntary activities undertaken by members of the public to influence public policy outcomes either directly or by influencing the selection of persons who make policies which include voting in elections, helping in a political campaign, donating money to a candidate or cause contacting officials, petitioning, protesting, and working with other people on issues. Cornwall and Goetz (2005) state that political participation is of great importance to women since it helps them in recognizing and articulating common interests, building alliances, broker differences, and learning modes of cooperation and consensus. Women's political participation, therefore, includes women's descriptive representation in the legislature and an equal share in the overall distribution of power (Sundström et al. 2015)

African women are less likely to participate in politics in Africa because of several limiting factors which includes traditional and cultural belief based on male sex supremacy, motherhood and marriage, a harsh political environment that comprises violence and unfriendliness, corruption in the political atmosphere in African governance, Violence, lack of financial resources, lack of adequate education, training, and skill development, gender inequality (UNDP Report (2017), Goetz (2003), Sowjanya and Basil (2015))

According to UNDP Report (2017), "in the political realm, African women have made notable strides with the representation of women increasing from 9.8% in 1995 to 23% in 2016" but still there is an obvious gap existing in politics involving women representation in different countries across Africa. IRI (2016) conducted a study of women's political leadership in Africa using quantitative data related to the national government. The data covered 29 out of 54 African countries which includes: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d' Ivoire, DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leon, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

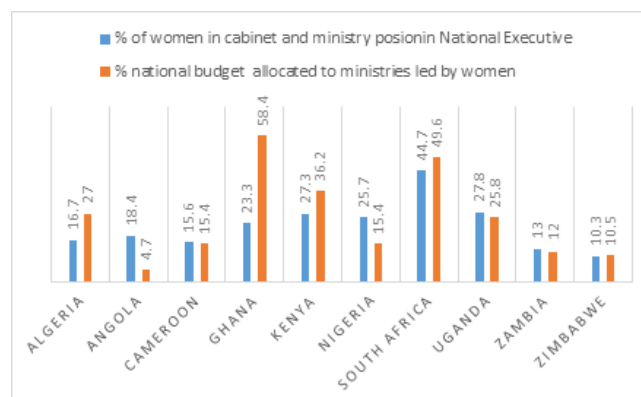
**Table 2:** Below are a selected few countries out of the 29 countries in women's Political Empowerment, Index ranking, and Gender Imbalance score for our study:

Overall Index Ranking	Country	Female Legislative Rep /Influence	Female Ministry Rep. /Influence	Gender Imbalance Index
1	South Africa	11.35	5.72	17.1
2	Rwanda	-3.8	48.95	45.2
4	Uganda	23.63	46.36	70
10	Liberia	79.94	17.85	97.8
11	Kenya	66.06	36.49	102.5
13	Ghana	85.89	18.35	104.2
14	Zimbabwe	27.62	79.25	106.9
16	Cameroon	46.67	68.99	115.7
19	Nigeria	84.4	58.93	143.3
24	Cote d' Ivoire	73.85	76.18	150
26	Malawi	74.23	86	160.2
27	Zambia	89.24	75.03	164.3
29	Sudan	75.71	60.73	175.7

**Source:** IRI (2016)

From the above table 2, South Africa has the lowest gender imbalance with an index of 17.1%, Sudan has the highest imbalance of 175.7%, followed by Zambia, while Nigeria has 143.3% with an index ranking of 19.

**Figure 2:** Percentage of Women serving in the lower house of the National Legislature/ Percentage of Committee or Commission Chaired by Women in selected African Countries:



**Data Source:** IRI (2016)

Figure 2 above displays the percentage of women representatives in the lower house of the National Legislature, Nigeria has the lowest number (5.6%), then Zambia (10.8%), Kenya (19.1%), Cameroon (31.1%), Zimbabwe (31.5%), Algeria (31.6%), Uganda (35.0%), Angola (36.8%) and South Africa (40.8%).



Percentage of Committee or Commission Chaired by Women: The figure 2.2.2 above showed that Algeria and Zambia had zero percent of women representatives in the house of parliament, Ghana (3.2%), Nigeria(10%), Kenya (14.8%), Cameroon (22.2%), Zimbabwe and Uganda (40.9%, 41.4%), South Africa (47%), and Angola (50%). In Nigeria many scholars have unveiled that women's participation in politics is a policy concern and below are some indices indicating the place of women in the house of representative and senate from 1999 to 2015:

**Table 3:** Women's position in Nigeria's house of representative and senate from 1999 to 2015:

World Ranking	House of Representative				Senate Representative			
	Elections date	Seats	Women	%	Elections date	seats	Women	%
181	03. 2015	360	20	5.6	03. 2015	109	7	6.5
125	04. 2011	360	24	6.8	04. 2011	109	7	6.4
117	04. 2007	360	25	7	04. 2007	109	9	8.3
107	04. 2003	360	17	4.9	04. 2003	109	3	2.8
104	02. 1999	360	12	3.4	02. 1999	109	3	2.8

**Source:** Inter-Parliamentary Union. "Women in National Parliaments" in Orji and Agbanyi (2018)

### Factors Affecting Women's Political Participation in Africa

Various literature has tried to examine the causes of poor women's political in the likes Goetz (2003) examined women's education and political participation, the paper discovers that education enhances other factors supporting political engagement such as access to high-income jobs that provide resources and contacts for political activity and access to non-political associations. Sowjanya and Hans (2015), reveal that education is a strong weapon for development and he suggests that the factors that inhibit women's empowerment in politics are: violence, gender inequality, family restrictions, and early marriage (Olayede 2016)

Odionye and Ofoego (2016), used a qualitative approach to unveil factors militating against women's political participation in Nigeria and among the factors are; lack of democratic culture, negative mindset on women's gender, social imbalance, political and financial constraints, religious, Orji and Agbanyi (2018), added cultural stereotypes. Swers and Rouse (2011), emphasize on lack of interest in participation in the contest for office while the electoral system, quotas, the economic affluence of the country, timing of women's suffrage, and political culture as all factors that bridge women's participation in politics of Nigeria (Sheckemer, 2008)

### Empirical Literature

Kassa (2015), employs a qualitative research method to examine the challenges and opportunities of women's political participation in Ethiopia using secondary data, the study emphasized that women's political participation will ensure openness, fight against rent-

seeking, political leadership and responsiveness, and allows women collectively to address their basic problems and needs in the society. IRI (2016) in a study of women's political leadership in 29 African countries out of 54, using qualitative data that is related to women's role in the national government, the result indicates that Nigeria ranked 19th out of 29 African countries while South Africa and Rwanda ranked 1st and 2nd. Likewise, Natisa (2016) utilize a national district-level dataset in India (information on investment (2000/2004) to check the relationship between women's representation in State Legislative Assembly (SLA) and district-level investment in primary schooling. Using OLS adjusting for confounder and spatial autocorrelation tried to separate the North and South India, the study reveals that "Women's representation in general SLA was negatively correlated to an investment in primary-school amenities and teachers. Women's representation in SLA seats reserved for under-represented minorities was positively associated with investments in primary schooling in the areas. Also, Burchi (2013) concentrates on the 16 biggest states in India, and analyzed the influence of women's political representation on primary school completion rate for the overall population and separately for girls and boys, the results indicated that a 10percent increase in the number of women involved in district politics leads to an increase of nearly 5.9 percent in primary school completion rates. Also, women's political representation impacts substantially more on the education of girls than boys and this helps in alleviating the gender gap in education.

Another strand of literature examines the effect of representation on the affairs of women in politics. Among such studies are Swers and Rouse (2011) using data from the US Congress to evaluate the impact of race, gender, and ethnicity on the behavior of legislators. The article concludes that women and minorities are underrepresented in congress. In Georgia, Blomgren (2010) examines the hindrances to women's political representation in National Parliament. The study argues that factors that limit women in politics include public opinion, the electoral system, and the nomination process in the political parties of Georgia. Also, Ruth and Ian (2007) employ two large comparative datasets to test the hypothesis that higher levels of women's elected representation will increase women's political knowledge. They conclude that there is a strong and significant long-term impact for descriptive representation for the 18 to 21. While Stockemer (2008) explored gender representation in 27 countries of the European Union. The cross-national analysis shows that the electoral system, the number of women in managerial positions, and the years women have had the right to vote are factors determining women's representation. Wolak (2019) employed a response from the cooperative congressional election study from 2006 to 2014 and discovers that both men and women are more politically knowledgeable when represented by a woman in congress and state government.

In Nigeria, Orji and Agbanyim (2018), explore various causes of low women representation in Nigeria based on descriptive and substantive representation using both primary (questionnaire and interview sampled from past legislators and civil society activists) and secondary data from literature: the study concludes that the rate of political representation has been fast for women in Africa about 30% women's representation in decision making especially in sub-Saharan Africa countries (Rwanda, Seychelles, Senegal, and South Africa)

but Nigeria has achieved little progress. Taiwo (2015) investigate the factors limiting women's participation in Nigerian politics from 1999 to 2007 using both primary and secondary data. The sample consists of 200 women selected from Lagos State through simple random sampling. The study emphasizes political thuggery and gangsters in Nigerian politics and the stigmatization of women in politics as a discouraging factor toward women's participation.

**Methodology**

The study method follows the neoclassical framework:

$$Y = AF(K, L) \text{-----} (1)$$

where Y is the level of output, K is the stock of capital, L is labour force while A is the Total Factor Productivity - an exogenously determined variable. In line with the objectives of the study, equation (3.1) is modified to accommodate relevant education variables. Subsequently, Y is substituted with WPPI while K and L are substituted with FDPRI, FDRSH, FCRPR, and FCRSS. Equation (3.1) therefore becomes:

$$WPPI = AF(FDPRI, FDRSH, FCRPR, FCRSS) \text{-----} (2)$$

Where,

- WPPI = Women Political Participation Index (a proxy for women's political participation),
- FDPRI = Female Dropout Rate in Primary Schools,
- FDRSH = Female Dropout Rate in Secondary Schools,
- FCRPR = Female Completion Rate in Primary Schools, and
- FCRSS = Female Completion Rate in Secondary Schools.

To obtain the marginal products of FDPRI, FDRSH, FCRPR and FCRSS, we take the total derivatives in equation (2) and normalize using the WPPI as follows:

$$\frac{d}{WPPI} = \frac{\partial WPPI}{\partial FDPRI} \cdot \frac{dFDPRI}{WPPI} + \frac{\partial WPPI}{\partial FDRSH} \cdot \frac{dFDRSH}{WPPI} + \frac{\partial WPPI}{\partial FCRPR} \cdot \frac{dFCRPR}{WPPI} + \frac{\partial WPPI}{\partial FCRSS} \cdot \frac{dFCRSS}{WPPI} \text{-----} (3)$$

Equation (3) is represented econometrically as follows:

$$\Delta WPPI_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \Delta FDPRI_t + \beta_2 \Delta FDRSH_t + \beta_3 \Delta FCRPR_t + \beta_4 \Delta FCRSS_t + V_t \text{-----} (4)$$

Where  $\beta_0$  is the intercept term,  $\beta_1, \dots, \beta_4$ , are model estimators while  $V_t$  is the stochastic term.

Equation (4) therefore, captures the impact of female dropout and completion rates on Women's Political Participation.

**Diagnostic Tests, Method for Evaluation, and Data**

Certain tests are important given in conformity with the recommendation of the neo-classical economists for valid regression analysis. Consequently, tests such as unit root and

cointegration tests were considered to ascertain the robustness of the data, and multi-regression analysis was employed to ascertain the significant relationship between the variables. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) shall be applied in the model estimation because of its Best Linear Unbiased Estimates (BLUE) property. Annual time series are sourced from V-med (for WPPI series) and United Nations (for female dropout and completion rates) databases. The data runs from 2003 to 2017. The annual time series is, however, quartered in order to meet the normal distribution status for a good regression model. Stata 11 is used to run the regression.

## Results

### Unit Root Test Results

To ensure the stationarity of the time-series data used in the regression analysis in line with the recommendation of the neo-classical economists for valid regression analysis, this study tested for the unit root of the variables as given below:

**Table 4:** Summary Results of the Unit Root Test

Variables	Level		First Difference		Order of Integration
	t-stat	5% critical value	t-statistics	5% critical value	
wppi	-2.904	-2.910	-8.682	-2.911	Order one
Fdpri	-2.387	-2.910	-8.496	-2.911	Order one
Fdrsh	-2.323	-2.910	-8.533	-2.911	Order one
Fcrpr	-2.080	-2.910	-8.517	-2.911	Order one
Fcrss	-1.708	-2.910	-8.560	-2.911	Order one

**Source:** Author's E-View Computation (2022)

The variables (WPPI, FDPRI, FDRSH, FCRPR, and FCRSS) are not stationary at the level; given that the corresponding t-statistics are less than 5% critical values in absolute terms as shown in table 4. They are, however, stationary at order one since the t-statistics are greater than the associated 5% critical values in absolute terms.

**Table 5:** Summary Results of the Cointegration Test

----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----			
t-stat	1% critical value	5% critical value	10% Critical
-1.910	-3.545	-2.910	-2.590
MacKinnon approximate p-value for $Z(t) = 0.3272$			

**Source:** Author's E-View Computation (2022)

The cointegration test indicates that the variables have no long-run relationship. This is because the ADF test statistics of the variables (-1.910) is less than its 5% critical value (-2.910) in absolute terms. More so, the MacKinnon approximate p-value for  $Z(t) = 0.3272$  is greater than 0.05 (an insignificant case) hence, not cointegrated.

**Table 6:** Summary Multi Regression Model Result

wppi	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t
fdpri	-.010917	.0048253	-2.26	0.027
fdrsh	-.021186	.0099827	-2.12	0.037
fcprpr	.0013465	.0018805	0.72	0.476
fcrss	.0062581	.001341	4.67	0.000
_cons	.002078	.0022362	0.93	0.356

The result in table 6 shows that all variables in the model have the a priori signs. It shows that the female school dropout rate in primary schools (fdpri) significantly reduces the political participation of women in Nigeria by about 0.011% given a unit increase in the variable. This result is expected since increases in female premature withdrawal from primary schools, bread increased illiterate rate thereby, limiting women's chances or ability to participate actively in politics. This may also limit their chances to be voted for given the fact that certain higher qualifications are required for candidates seeking elective positions in the country's political process. It further shows that the female school dropout rate in secondary schools (fdrsh) significantly reduces the political participation of women in Nigeria by about 0.021%. The outcome also follows a priori expectation since increases in female dropout at the secondary level, reduce the ability to understand their rights in the political system and the poise to exercise such rights in the political process. This agrees with the saying: "half education is a disease". Further, secondary school certificates are prerequisites for all elective positions and by extension, the appointed positions.

In addition to the above, the female completion rate in primary schools (fcprpr) is seen to be insignificantly increasing the political participation of women in Nigeria by 0.0014%. Female completion rate in primary schools (fcprpr) contributes to increased political participation of women but at an insignificant rate. It follows that women who complete primary school education in Nigeria hardly understand existing political rules let alone take part in the process. However, they are better off in the political process than their dropout counterparts. Finally, the result shows that the female completion rate in secondary schools (fcrss) is seen to increase (insignificant terms), and the political participation of women in Nigeria by about 0.0062%. This result is expected since those that have their secondary school academic programme completed are better off than those that do not complete theirs. Female pupils/students who complete their academic programmes in secondary schools have more are better off in understanding their political rights and privileges. They are also prone to increased participation in politics. Taking care of the unobservable characteristics that can affect the political participation of women in Nigeria, the result suggests constant term (\_cons) increases the political participation of women in Nigeria at an insignificant level of 0.0021%.

## Conclusion

Globally, the rates of women's participation in politics lag behind that of men. However, increases in women's participation in politics and an intense wave of feminism across the world have produced improved outcomes in women's political engagement. Women form the bulk of registered voters in Nigeria but their number is abysmally low in both elected and appointed positions in government. This is largely linked to several factors including poor education attainment at the basic level. This study looks at the effect of female school dropouts on women's political participation in Nigeria. From the findings, female school dropout reduces women's political participation significantly. The challenges of female education are indeed looming in Nigeria and therefore require emergency responses at levels of governance including global partners. The country's space should be expanded to address the factors that affect females' pre-withdrawal from school including cultural, religious, psychological, economic, political, and socio-political factors. Parents, teachers, and caregivers should as a matter of priority, pay profound attention to the education of the girl child especially, as it relates to political participation in the wider society. The government at all levels, should create significant space in political positions for women as effort in this regard will help to motivate female pupils and students to complete their academic programmes successfully.

## Suggestions for Further Studies

The limitation encountered in this work is that of data availability, therefore, we suggest that further empirical studies should use primary data.

## References

- Ajaja, J. (2012). A study of the parents' role in career decision process, *J. Occupational Guidance Quarterly* 27(5) 137- 143.
- Allensworth, E. M. & Easton, J. Q. (2004). *What matters for staying on-track and graduating in Chicago public high schools: A close look at course grades, failures, and attendance in the freshman year*, Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.
- Arowolo, A., Adefunke, A. & Adaja, J. (2016). Trend analysis of student dropout rate and the effect on the social and educational systems in Nigeria, *International Journal of Latest Research in R Engineering and Technology*, 2(4), 08-16
- Asuncion, F., Juan, H., Beatriz, P., Joel J., & Francisco, J. (2016). *Risk factors for school dropout in a sample of Juvenile offenders frontiers in psychology*. (7). Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg2016.01993
- Azam, E. (2007). *News and views from Africa*. <http://www.newsfromafrica/indices>
- Beaman, L. E., Duflo, R. P., & Topalova, P. (2012). *Female leadership raises aspirations and educational attainment for girls: A policy experiment in India*, *Science* 335, 60(68), 82–86.
- Burchi, F. (2013). *Women's political role and poverty in the educational dimension: A district-level analysis in India*, Bonn: DIE (Discussion Paper 23)



- Blomgreen, E. (2010). *Women and political participation: A minor field study on hindrances for women's political participation in Georgia*, "Linnaeus University" G3 – Thesis in Political Science Fall Semester 2010, 1-54
- Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin 2017
- CEDEFOP (2008). *Europe in United Nation educational scientific and cultural organization/ international center for technical and vocational education and training*, Resource Publication. Available: <https://unevoc.unesco.org/.go.php?p>.
- Chirbong, P. (2016). *An investigation into causes of student's dropout in Secondary Schools: A survey of some selected secondary school in Jos North Local Government Area Plateau State*.
- Croninger, R. & Lee, V. (2001). Social capital and dropping out of high school: Benefits to at-risk students of teachers' support and guidance, *Teachers College Record: 103*(4), 48-81
- Cornwall, A. & Goetz, A. M. (2005). *Democratizing democracy: Feminist perspectives in democratization*, *12*(5), 784
- De-Ridd, K. A. A., Pape, K., Johnson, R., Holmen, T. L., Westin, S., & Bjørngaard, J. H. (2013). Adolescent health and high school dropout: A prospective cohort study of 9000 Norwegian Adolescents (The Young-HUNT). *PLoS ONE 8*(9): e74954. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0074954>
- De-Wit, D., Kim, K. B., Rye, J. & Martin, B. (2016). Perceptions of declining classmate and teacher's support following the transition to high school: Potential correlates of increasing student mental health difficulties. *Psychology in Schools, 48*(6), 556-572
- De-Witte, K., Cabus, S., Thyssen, G., Groot, W., & Van-den Brink, H. M. (2016). A critical review of the literature on school dropout, *Educ. Res. Rev. 10*, 13–28. doi: 10.1016/j.edurev.
- Goetz, A. M. (2003). Women's education and political participation, *Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality*. United Education Scientific and Cultural Organization. 1-22.
- Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) (2018).
- International Republic Institute (IRI) (2016). *Women's political empowerment representation and influence in African*, Available: [www.IRI.ORG/@/RIGlobal](http://www.IRI.ORG/@/RIGlobal)
- Kara, B. (2015). *What is a dropout? brief 3*, Available: [www.purdue.edu/hhs/hdfs/fii/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/s-ncfis04c03.pdf](http://www.purdue.edu/hhs/hdfs/fii/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/s-ncfis04c03.pdf)

- Kassa, S. (2015). Challenges and opportunities of women political participation in Ethiopia, *J Glob Econ* 3, 162. doi:10.4172/2375-4389.1000162
- Lockett, C., Cornelious, L. & Gray, K. (2015). Factors contributing to secondary school dropout in an urban school district. LVI5036, Available: <http://www.acibri.com/Lv2015 Manuscripts/LV15036.PDF>
- Merchant, C. (1980). *The death of nature: Women, ecology and the scientific revolution*, New York: Harper Collins.
- Nakpodia, E. (2010). An analysis of dropout rate among secondary school student in Delta State, Nigeria (1999-2005), *Journal of Social Sciences*, 23:2, 99-103, DOI: 10.1080/09718923.2010.11892817
- Natasa, H., Kathryn, M., Solveig, A. & Rohini, P. (2016). Women political empowerment and investment in Primary Schooling in India, *HHS Journal*. Doi:10.1007/s11205-015-0870-4
- Odinye, R. & Ofoego, C. (2016). Education as a panacea to women active participation in Nigeria politics, *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(30), 212-217
- Ogiri, E. A. (2016). *Assessment of o dropout rate among secondary school students in Benue state Nigeria*, Unpublished master thesis of Amadu Bello University. Nigeria
- Oloyede, O. (2016). *Monitoring participation of women in politics in Nigeria: National bureau of statistics (NBS)*. Available: [https:// unstat.un.org/unsd/gender/Finland oct2016/documents/Nigeria.pdf](https://unstat.un.org/unsd/gender/Finland/oct2016/documents/Nigeria.pdf).
- Orji, N. & Agbanyim, O. (2018). Women's political representation in Nigeria, *Ford Foundation*, 1-14.
- Plumwood, V. (1993). *Feminism and the mastery of nature*, London: Routledge
- Rumberger, R. K. & Arellano, F. (2008). The causes and consequences of student mobility, *Journal of Negro Education*, 72, 6-21.
- Rumberger, R. K. (2004). The causes and consequences of student mobility, *Journal of Negro Education*, 72(6), 6-21.
- Sen, G. & Mukherjee, A. (2014). No empowerment without rights, no rights without politics: Gender-equality, MDGs and Post-2015 development agenda, *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 15 (2-3), 188-202.
- Shiva, V. (1989). *Staying alive: Women, ecology and development*, London: Zed Books.

- Ikulile, M., Ncube, D., & Klupe, M. (2016). An assessment of factors contributing to high School pupil's dropout Rates in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Bulilima District. 3(9), 855-863
- Stockemer, D. (2008). Why are there differences in the political representation of women in the 27 countries of the European Union? *Journal of Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 8(4). 476-493, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15705850701640884>
- Sowjanya, S. & Hans, V. (2015). *Role of education in women empowerment and development: Issues and impact*, Available: [Http://www.academia.edu/16189168/Role of education-in-women-empowerment-and-development-issues-and-impact](http://www.academia.edu/16189168/Role_of_education-in-women-empowerment-and-development-issues-and-impact).
- Sundström, A., Paxton, P. Wang, Y., & Lindberg, S. (2015). *Women's political empowerment: A new global index, 1900-2012*. University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute, Working Paper (WP) 19, <https://v-dem.net/media/filer>
- Swier, M. & Rouse, S. (2011). *Descriptive representation of group interest: The oxford handbooks of the American congress*. Doi:10.1093/oxford/9780199559947.003.001/
- Taiwo, E. (2015). *Women participation in Nigeria politics: Case study of Lagos Nigeria*, Department of mass communication- Lecitoyen University Republic of Benin, Cotonou
- Theunissen, M. J., Hans, B., Petra, V. & Frans, F. (2000). *Why wait? Early determinants of school dropout in preventive pediatric primary care: Research Article*, Available- <https://doi.org/10.371/journal.pone.0142315>.
- Uhlener, C. J. (2001). *Participation: Political international Encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences*. 11078 – 11082 (Elsevier Science: 2001) Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/Bo-08-043076-7/01187-6>
- UNICEF Global Database (2017). *Based on MICDS DHS and other national household survey*
- United Nations (2000). *Corporal punishment key reason for school dropouts*. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?>
- United Nations (2005). *UN millennium development goals*, New York: United Nations. Available: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>
- United Nations (2015). *World population prospects: The 2015 revision*, <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/files>
- Wang, Y., Lindenfors, P., Sundström, A., Jansson, F., & Lindberg, S. (2015). *No democratic Transition without women's rights: A global sequence analysis 1900-2012*, University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy Institute, Working Paper (WP) 12, <https://v-dem.net/media/filer>

Wolak, J. (2019). *Descriptive representation and the political engagement of women*, Cambridge University Press. Available: <https://doi.org/10.017/51743923x18000910>

Wood, G. E. (2010). *Reducing the dropout rate: School improvement research series*, New York: SIRS.

## APPENDIX

### The Model

```
reg wppi fdpri fdrsh fcrpr fcrss
```

Source	SS	df	MS			
Model	.451906012	4	.112976503	Number of obs =	76	
Residual	.089552737	71	.001261306	F( 4, 71) =	89.57	
				Prob > F =	0.0000	
				R-squared =	0.8346	
				Adj R-squared =	0.8253	
Total	.54145875	75	.00721945	Root MSE =	.03551	

	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
wppi						
fdpri	-.0080108	.0034802	-2.30	0.024	-.0149501	-.0010714
fdrsh	.013774	.0117757	1.17	0.246	-.0097062	.0372542
fcrpr	-.0008099	.001101	-0.74	0.464	-.0030052	.0013853
fcrss	.0106735	.0012912	8.27	0.000	.0080989	.0132481
_cons	.5141831	.1951391	2.63	0.010	.1250868	.9032794

### Unit Root Test

#### wppi ~ I(1)

```
. dfuller wppi
```

Dickey-Fuller test for unit root

Test Statistic	Interpolated Dickey-Fuller			
	1% Critical Value	5% Critical Value	10% Critical Value	
Z(t)	-3.545	-2.910	-2.590	

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0448

```
. dfuller d.wppi
```

Dickey-Fuller test for unit root

Test Statistic	Interpolated Dickey-Fuller			
	1% Critical Value	5% Critical Value	10% Critical Value	
Z(t)	-3.546	-2.911	-2.590	

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000

### Fdpri ~ I(1)

. dfuller fdpri

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                                Number of obs =          75
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical   5% Critical   10% Critical
      Statistic      Value         Value         Value
-----
Z(t)          -2.387          -3.545          -2.910          -2.590
-----
MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.1455
```

. dfuller d.fdpri

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                                Number of obs =          74
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical   5% Critical   10% Critical
      Statistic      Value         Value         Value
-----
Z(t)          -8.496          -3.546          -2.911          -2.590
-----
MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000
```

### Fdrsh ~ I(1)

. dfuller fdrsh

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                                Number of obs =          75
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical   5% Critical   10% Critical
      Statistic      Value         Value         Value
-----
Z(t)          -2.323          -3.545          -2.910          -2.590
-----
MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.1648
```

. dfuller d.fdrsh

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                                Number of obs =          74
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical   5% Critical   10% Critical
      Statistic      Value         Value         Value
-----
Z(t)          -8.533          -3.546          -2.911          -2.590
-----
MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000
```

### Fcrpr ~ I(1)

. dfuller fcrpr

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                      Number of obs =          75
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical      5% Critical      10% Critical
      Statistic      Value          Value          Value
-----
Z(t)          -2.080          -3.545          -2.910          -2.590
-----
```

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.2528

. dfuller d.fcrpr

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                      Number of obs =          74
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical      5% Critical      10% Critical
      Statistic      Value          Value          Value
-----
Z(t)          -8.517          -3.546          -2.911          -2.590
-----
```

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000

### Fcrss ~ I(1)

. dfuller fcrss

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                      Number of obs =          75
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical      5% Critical      10% Critical
      Statistic      Value          Value          Value
-----
Z(t)          -1.708          -3.545          -2.910          -2.590
-----
```

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.4271

. dfuller d.fcrss

```
Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                      Number of obs =          74
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
      Test          1% Critical      5% Critical      10% Critical
      Statistic      Value          Value          Value
-----
Z(t)          -8.560          -3.546          -2.911          -2.590
-----
```

MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.0000



## The Cointegration Test

. dfuller residual

```

Dickey-Fuller test for unit root                      Number of obs   =          75
----- Interpolated Dickey-Fuller -----
              Test          1% Critical      5% Critical      10% Critical
              Statistic     Value          Value          Value
-----
Z(t)          -1.910          -3.545          -2.910          -2.590
-----
MacKinnon approximate p-value for Z(t) = 0.3272

```

## The Model Regression Result

. reg d.wppi d.fdpri d.fdrsh d.fcrpr d.fcrss

```

              Source |          SS          df          MS          Number of obs =          75
-----+-----
              Model | .028068768           4   .007017192          F( 4, 70) = 18.99
              Residual | .025870084          70   .000369573          Prob > F      = 0.0000
-----+-----
              Total | .053938852          74   .000728903          R-squared      = 0.5204
              Adj R-squared = 0.4930
              Root MSE   = .01922
-----+-----
              D.wppi |          Coef.   Std. Err.      t    P>|t|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-----+-----
              fdpri |
              D1. | -.0109167   .0048253    -2.26  0.027    -.0205405   -.0012929
              fdrsh |
              D1. | -.021186   .0099827    -2.12  0.037     .0012762   .0410957
              fcrpr |
              D1. | .0013465   .0018805     0.72  0.476    -.0050971   .0024041
              fcrss |
              D1. | .0062581   .001341     4.67  0.000     .0035837   .0089326
              _cons | .002078   .0022362     0.93  0.356    -.0023821   .006538
-----+-----

```