



International Day Of The Girl Child Education; Key to Girl Child Empowerment

99%

*of Respondents agree that
"Girl Child Education"
is important in their
community.*

Factors Militating Against Girl Child Education In Nigeria

28%

Poverty

20%

Culture &
Tradition

18%

Parental
Literacy

15%

Child
Marriage

9%

Gender
Discrimination

4%

Religion

3%

Ignorance &
Illiteracy

3%

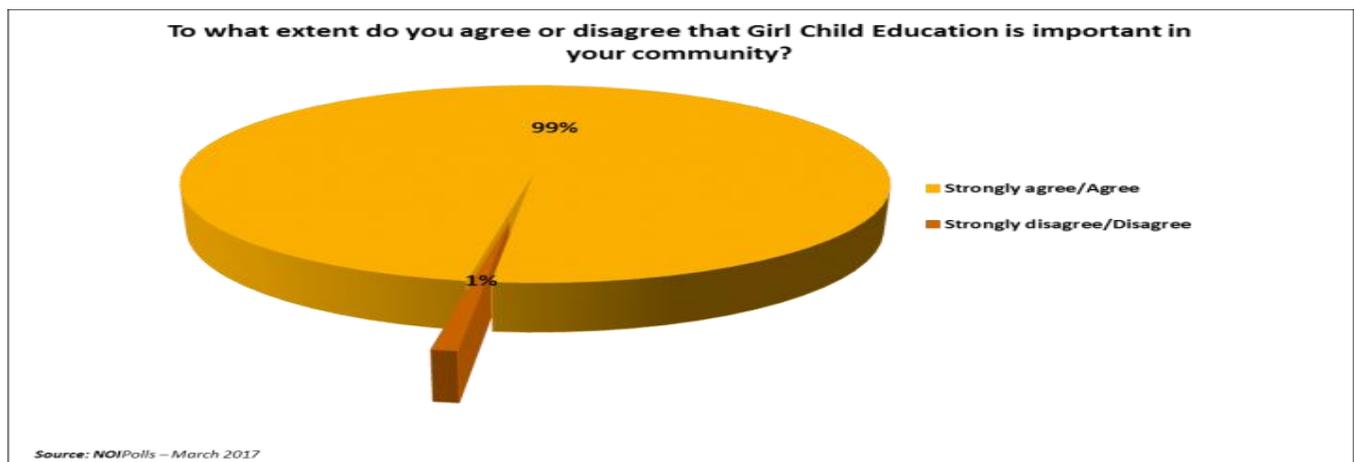
Others

GIRL CHILD EDUCATION THROWBACK

Education; Key to Girl Child Empowerment

Abuja, Nigeria. October 9, 2018. The United Nation’s International Day of the Girl Child is commemorated annually on the 11th of October, since 2012. The main aim of the day is to promote girl’s empowerment and fulfilment of their human rights while also highlighting and addressing the needs and the challenges that girls all over the world face. The theme for the 2018 commemoration is *“With Her: A Skilled Girl Force”*. Under this theme, the Day will mark the beginning of a year-long effort to bring together partners and stakeholders to advocate for, and draw attention and investments to the most pressing needs and opportunities for girls to attain skills for employability. This can be achieved through expanding existing learning opportunities, charting new pathways and calling on the global community to rethink how to prepare girls for a successful transition into the world of work.¹

In commemorating the International Day of the Girl Child, NOIPolls presents a throwback from its previous public opinion poll conducted in 2017, which highlighted the perception of Nigerians on the importance of Girl Child Education and the factors militating against it in Nigeria. The poll revealed that almost all the respondents (99 percent) acknowledged that Girl Child Education is important to their community as shown in the chart below. This is impressive considering the fact that the girl child needs to be educated in order to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills needed to advance her status for social interactions and self-improvement.



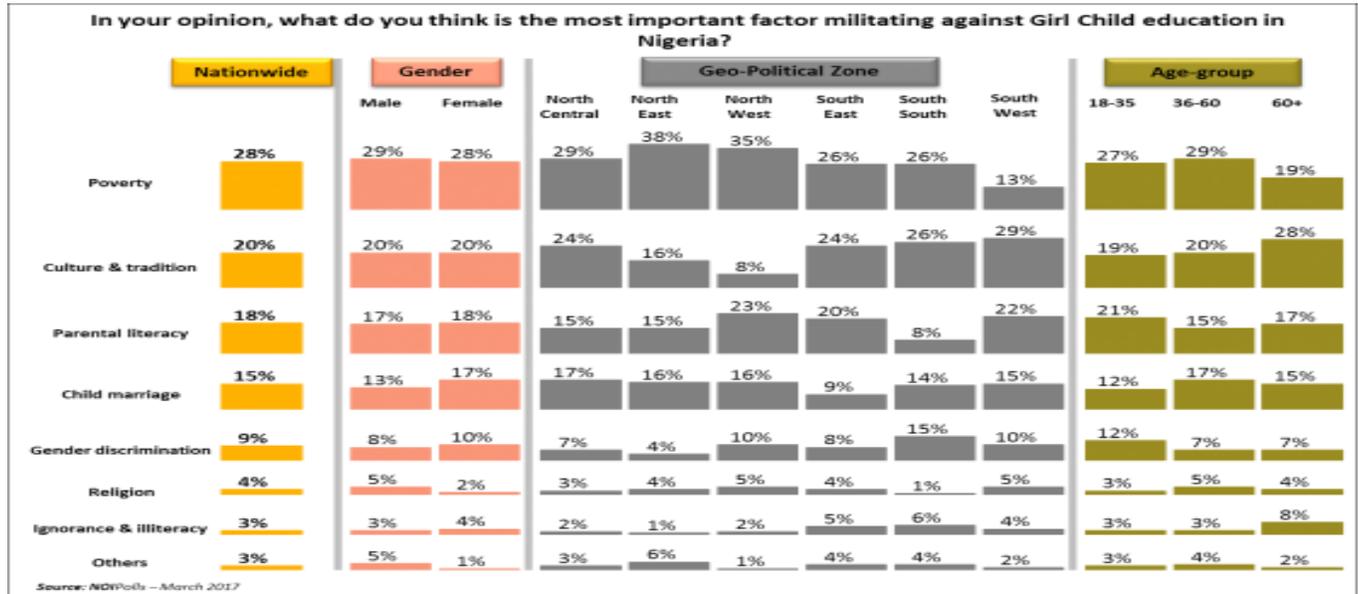
Furthermore, the poll also sought the opinion of Nigerians on the factors militating against girl child education in Nigeria and a greater fraction of the respondents (28 percent) cited poverty as a major factor militating against girl child education. This is not surprising as poverty has been one of the most disturbing economic issues ravaging the entire sub-Saharan Africa. With about 67 percent of Nigerians living in poverty,² parents will be faced with challenges of making a choice of sacrificing the education of some of their children which is usually the girl child.

Another social problem mentioned by 20 percent is the one posed by culture and tradition. Some traditions stipulate that a woman’s place is in her husband’s kitchen and her primary role centers on her home. These beliefs

¹ <http://www.un.org/en/events/girlchild/>

² <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/01/67-nigerians-live-poverty-line-presidential-aide/>

have kept many girls away from education as such families’ see investment in girl child education as a waste. Even after some girls narrowly get the education, they face social and cultural barriers to obtaining leadership and management functions because they are women.



In conclusion, it is evident from the poll that girl child education is of great importance to communities in Nigeria. Girl child education enables the girl utilize her full potentials, broadens her mind, prepares her for the challenges of life and teaches her how to conquer them; she is given the confidence to discover who and what she wants to be. While the importance of education to girl child empowerment in the Nigerian society cannot be over emphasized, there is a need for closer attention to be paid on the factors militating against girl child education. Achieving this would in turn require an emphasis on good governance and inclusiveness, as well as a general promotion of policies on gender equality, rural development, poverty alleviation, societal re-orientation, and job creation.

Finally, girl child empowerment, as highlighted in the theme for this year observance, should therefore start from a heightened awareness on the importance of girl child empowerment because the girls of today are the women of tomorrow. It is also important that international organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders support and invest in girls by transforming the risks and deprivations they face into pathways towards a better life. This will ensure a future assured with better health, less infant diseases and deaths as well as achieving other Sustainable Development Goals.

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