



# Gender Disparities in Educational Attainment Among Northern Nigerian Adolescents: A Qualitative Exploration

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## Abstract

In Northern Nigeria, gender disparities in educational attainment persist, with girls often facing barriers to schooling and completion. Qualitative interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 30 adolescent participants aged 15-18 from rural and urban areas. Interviews covered family background, cultural norms, school experiences, and aspirations for the future. Analysis revealed that over half (54%) of respondents faced challenges related to early marriage or pregnancy, significantly impacting their educational progress and completion rates. The findings highlight the critical role of addressing socio-cultural factors in improving girls' access to education and support for their holistic development. Schools should implement gender-sensitive curricula and community-based initiatives to promote inclusive learning environments. Policymakers are encouraged to develop targeted interventions that address cultural barriers.

**Keywords:** *African contexts, qualitative research, gender studies, Nigeria, marginalized populations, participant observation, social determinants*

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